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The History of Painting

From the Fourth to the Early Nineteenth Century

By

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Authorised English Edition

Translated from the German and Edited with Annotations

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In Two Volumes

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Preface

THE author of the present work, now for the first time presented in English translation, needs no introduction to the English-speaking public. To all investigators and students of the history of art he is widely known as the author of numerous authoritative works upon the history of illustration and of painting. Some of us, indeed, had the good fortune to hear his brilliant paper upon *Problems of the Study of Modern Painting* at the congress held in connection with the Universal Exposition at St. Louis in 1904. To the general public also, he is widely known by his standard treatise, *Geschichte der Malerei im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (3 vols., Munich, 1893–4), the English translation of which appeared under the title, *The History of Modern Painting*, in 1895–6. This rather inaccurate translation of the German title of the work (since the term "Modern Painting" is usually employed to include the entire development since the Renaissance) should not lead the reader to confuse it with the present work, the title of which I have translated *The History of Painting*.

Its original, the *Geschichte der Malerei*, appeared in five small volumes in the *Sammlung Göschen* (Leipzig,

1900). While the first named work is practically confined to the nineteenth century, of which it is the standard history, the latter treats the entire development of European painting from the downfall of the antique world to the early nineteenth century, ending therefore where the former begins. But although it is more general in treatment and less prolix in detail than the earlier work, it is equally brilliant in style and interesting in conception. For it represents the consistent application to this more extensive period of the author's interesting theory of the interpretation of the great styles of painting from the psychology of the age in which they originated.

The scope and purpose of the present work are most clearly indicated in Professor Muther's brief and modest preface to the German edition:

"These volumes [he says] do not constitute a text-book of the history of painting. The author has undertaken to present neither the biographies of the authors nor descriptions of their pictures. For the reader who is interested in such personal and descriptive records the material will be found available in a number of authoritative works. In the present treatise the author has attempted to explain from the psychology (so to speak) of each period its dominant style and to interpret the works of art as 'human documents.' The prescribed brevity of the work has rendered it impossible to do more than touch upon certain of the questions and problems considered."

The interpretation of the works of the great masters from the time and circumstances under which they arose is not a novelty in the history of art. It is of common occurrence in the history of literature, and in artists' biographies of the present day it is customary

to devote one or more chapters to such interpretation. Some biographies, indeed, like Thode's admirable *Leben Michelangelos*, are written entirely from the psychological standpoint. But no one has heretofore gone as far as Professor Muther in the application of the psychological method to such extensive periods, nor has any one used the method as incisively as he. The great styles are for him the necessary outcome of the intellectual and religious tendencies of the age; as, for example, the religious art of such painters as Botticelli, Crivelli, Perugino, and Memling are part and parcel of the great religious reaction throughout Europe of which the chief spokesman was Savonarola. The religious paintings of Zurbaran and the portraits of Velasquez are for him the logical expression of the two dominant tendencies of the Spanish monarchy, Catholicism and absolutism. Proceeding with the same method from the age to the individual, he interprets the works of the artist as the expression of his psychical development, bringing the reader into more sympathetic relation with the artist than is possible by any other method.

This is hardly the proper place for an exposition of the advantages of the psychological method or a comparison of it with others. Suffice it to say that, as applied by Professor Muther, it gives greater unity to the development of European painting in that it reveals new and interesting bonds of union between widely separated schools; that its use elucidates a

number of doubtful points; that it discloses relations among individual artists not hitherto evident; and that it brings the reader into more sympathetic relation with the art of the great epochs as well as with the individual masters. So well, indeed, does the author's treatment assign the relative importance of epochs and individuals, and so well has he selected for detailed treatment the really significant facts and masters, relegating the lesser lights to a proper subordinate position, that his work, although it forms a well organised and harmonious whole, generally assumes the character of a series of brilliant and critical essays. Such interpretations as the sections treating Giotto, Piero della Francesca, Dürer, Rembrandt, Watteau, and many others are highly valuable contributions to art criticism.

It must not however be assumed, because the treatment is a psychological one, that the author fails to give an insight into the technical qualities of the great masters, even though this may be only incidental to the treatment. In this regard the present work fully sustains the reputation achieved by the author in his *History of Modern Painting.*

The style is clear and intelligible, more resembling clever magazine writing than the ponderous, involved style frequently met with in German works of this character. It has been the effort of the translator to preserve as far as possible the flavour of the original, although this has often been difficult.

In accordance with the popular character of the work, the author has refrained from the use of footnotes. It did not seem within the province of the editor to change this plan, except in a few instances requiring elucidation to the English-speaking public. A few other footnotes have been added in such cases where an explanation seemed desirable; as where the author's view conflicts with the consensus of expert opinion, or in case of some seeming error of detail. Nor has the editor esteemed it his duty to express or comment upon the instances in which his own opinion differs from that of the author.

In the index will be found in connection with the name of each artist whose work is considered the specification of the year of his birth and death, in so far as these are obtainable. The translator has adopted the form of the names used by Professor Muther in all cases in which they are permissible in English.

In conclusion, the translator desires to express his sincere thanks to his friend, A. I. du Pont Coleman, Esq., whose valuable advice and assistance have been freely and readily given, and his obligation to the publishers, who have spared no expense to make the book attractive in form. The numerous half-tone illustrations which appear in it have been selected with a view of supplementing the narrative with a pictorial presentation of the history of painting.

GEORGE KRIEHN.

NEW YORK, *November*, 1906.

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Book 1.

Mediæval Painting

Chapter II

The Middle Age

1.—The Mosaic Style

THE history of Christian painting may perhaps be conceived as a great compromise with Hellenism. With the collapse of the antique world, the most subtly refined civilisation that the world has ever seen came to an end. By its spiritual tendencies and its denial of the earthly, Christianity placed almost insuperable barriers to art. "Great Pan was dead." Religion with the Greeks had been a joyous cult of the senses teaching men to enjoy life here below; it now became a belief in the other world, which regarded the earthly existence as only a sad preparation for the life to come. True, the spring still came; men loved, the flowers bloomed, the birds sang, and the meadows were green. But all this was a delusion of Hell intended to lead the believer astray and to fill his soul with sinful thoughts. The world beyond was his home, the present world only a Golgotha, where the skull lay and Christ hung crucified.

By this ascetic trend so hostile to sensuality,[1] which proscribed the love of nature and the enjoyment of this world, Christianity tied up the chief artery of artistic creation; and only in one direction was the course left open.

"It had deepened the psychical, and revealed treasures of kindness and love, of humility and self-denial, which Greek thought had not yet conceived. In this direction, if any art at all should originate, the development must go. As Greek art had been sensual and physical, the Christian must become psychical and spiritual. If the former had sought its aim in the ideal perfection of bodily form, Christianity must find hers in the apotheosis of the soul."[2]

Although by a circuitous route, painting approached this aim.

The first reaction against Hellenism was this, that art was entirely forbidden. "Cursed be all who paint pictures," is a sentiment often recurring in the writings of the church fathers. Not until Christianity had come into contact with other cultures, after it had come to Rome, did it lose its hostile character to art. But as these artists were Romans it is at the same time explicable why the first works of art were much less Christian than antique. It is the affair of the theologian to describe how painting began as a language of signs, and to explain all those symbols, the cross, the fish, the lamb, the dove, and the phœnix,

[1] The terms "sensual" and "sensuality" are used in this translation to signify that which appertains to the senses; without evil significance, and corresponding with the German *sinnlich* and *Sinnlichkeit*.

[2] It was impossible for the translator to obtain from the author in time the source of this citation, evidently the same authority cited on pp. 6, 46–47.

which, as a kind of hieroglyphic writing, open the history of Christian art. The archæologist must explain why in the pictures of the catacombs, although they express a new spirit, the forms of the antique are used without reserve. All these mural paintings, *Hermes Bearing the Ram, Orpheus Playing the Lute,* or other figures borrowed from paganism, and now introduced with Christian change of meaning, are joyful and bright. As in the mural paintings of Pompeii, the entire treatment is decorative in a pleasant sense. But this correspondence shows that the art of the catacombs belongs to the past, not the future—that it is the end, not the beginning of an artistic development.

Not until after the first churches were constructed, and Christianity represented no longer a sect but the ruling state religion, could a Christian art develop. The symbolic element, which had been borrowed from the antique, becomes less prominent, and the sacred personages of Christian art receive their fixed types. This development is reflected in the mosaics. Although they also were created by a technical process known to the ancient Romans, the spirit which pervades them is a new one. In these works the whole tremendous power of the church in the first days of its recognition is expressed. "As once in the temples of the Hellenic world the gold-gleaming statues of Zeus and Pallas had shone, so now from the apses of the basilicas the images of Jesus and of His court look

down in solemn splendour." A solemn repose characterises all these figures; motionless as statues, they are enthroned side by side in simple symmetry. The vine decoration and the playful, joyous elements of antique art which still prevailed in the paintings of the catacombs have disappeared. All is solemn, imposing, suffused with majestic splendour, like the heroes of the Christian faith, as if for eternity, and with a sublimity and power attained by no other technique.

"The gigantic size of the figures, their immobility, and the threatening glance of their staring open eyes has a superhuman terrifying effect. The whole spirit of the middle age, in its gloomy dogmatism and fanatic severity, and the unshaken sense of power of the ancient church have found form in these sublime works.

"Only one thing is no longer felt: that Christianity was originally the religion of love. In course of the centuries Christian doctrine had taken an increasingly dogmatic form. The loving founder of the new faith, the simple Jesus of Nazareth, had by the decree of the councils been transformed into a God; and God Himself, the loving Father, had become a punishing despot. So, at least, the mosaics announce. They speak of the power and of the severity of God, not of His kindness; they preach the fear of God, but no heavenly love."

That they are made of stone is significant; for stony, cold, and icy is the heart of these beings. All-knowing, all-seeing, and unapproachable, divinity, like an omnipresent revenging Nemesis or a stony Gorgon, looks down upon the world.

The gloomy, rigid, and motionless character of the mosaic style was justified as long as Byzantine painting was confined to Byzantium; for here it corresponded with the development followed by Christian belief.

CHRIST ENTHRONED, SURROUNDED BY FOUR APOSTLES

Apse of San Paolo Fuori le Mura, Rome

It suited to the formal character of the state, the solemn ceremony of manners, the rigid gravity of the court, and the strangely stable, oriental spirit pervading all life. But the youthful, unexhausted nations of the West, who from the close of the first millennium had entered as new factors into history, also required ideals. Whence should they be derived?

Although the Occident too had long been nourished from the mighty heritage of antiquity, the incursions of the northern barbarians put an end to this ancient civilisation. After the events of the German migrations and during the resulting struggles, there was for centuries no room for art, which can only flourish in the soil of a clarified culture. The new races began indeed to govern themselves and to form real nations; but with all their military greatness, energy and force, they had not yet entered that æsthetic stage which is a prerequisite of artistic development. Men were engaged in eating and drinking, building, tilling the soil, and populating the country: it was only a time for *armi*, not for *marmi*. Not until the material wants had been supplied did enterprising Byzantines cross over to adorn the new churches with their works of art. Through them the Occident received its first artistic veneer; but the schematism of that withered art was also transferred to the new domain. Confined between the civilisation of the declining Orient and the barbarism of their home, artists hesitated between blind imitations of Byzantine models and awkward,

crude, and helpless creation from their own feelings. In the one case a rigid scheme prevails, in the other barbaric wildness.

The miniature painting of the Irish, Gallic, and German monks was less painting than calligraphy. From scrolls and flourishes purely calligraphic human figures were constructed. Panel-painting occasionally attempted to break through Byzantine rigidity: the artists painted gigantic crucifixes and even ventured upon more dramatic subjects, such as martyrdoms and passion scenes. But every effort was thwarted by their inability to draw. The limbs are uncouth, the movements clumsy, and the pictures unnatural, crude, and hideous. In other instances foreign models were imitated, only with greater crudity and rudeness. It seems as if the painters had intentionally imitated the aged character of their Byzantine models. Morose and emaciated figures, withered as mummies, with hollow cheeks and deep-set eyes—beings grown old through castigation and penance,—are the subjects of the later products of mosaic-painting. And even these, instead of becoming more lifelike, constantly grew more rigid and gloomy. As mosaics played the determinative rôle in art, mural and glass painting acquired the same ascetic, petrified style. Not an eyelash of these figures quivers; not a feature betrays that they could hear prayers of men, graciously comfort or mercifully pardon them. Severe as judges, and with pitiless dignity, they stare down like threatening

tables of the law, demanding submission, fear, and obedience, but according neither mercy, comfort, nor redemption.

And yet men long for love and comfort. When the official forms of religion had hardened into spiritless rigidity, they again sought to enter into a personal relation with God, and to honour Him not as a slave his master, but as a child his father. They desired saints who should not make the sinner tremble by their heartless severity, but who should kindly and lovingly pity him. In the great religious movement accomplished in the twelfth century, this longing found expression. Amidst the great world-moving questions of Catholicism the care for the individual had been forgotten. The exciting age of the crusades had concealed for a time the interior emptiness; but after the jubilation of war had passed over, it was all the more perceptible. The people required clergy who should take part in their pain and joy; who should preach no longer in Latin but in the vernacular, and proclaim the gospel, not with scholastic subtlety, but with the same patriarchal simplicity as did Christ upon the Mount of Olives. Peter Waldo had already appeared, but the church had condemned him as a heretic. Francis of Assisi was the first to have a better fate.

When he began his sermons a feeling of springtime passed over the earth. It seemed to men as if a new Messiah had come; and Francis indeed refounded

Christianity by the substitution of a religion of feeling for a rigid faith in the letter. Love bridged the abyss which had until now yawned so abruptly between God and mankind. By depriving the Godhead of its awful rigidity, mysticism gave it a feeling, human soul. Mary especially, the youthful mother of God, became the centre of worship. The adoration of Mary reflected in part the knightly reverence for women felt by the Crusaders and the Minnesingers; but it is due also to her personality, which, in its tender, helpless womanhood, was more sympathetic to the sentiment of the age than the tragic figure of the Son of God and the severe majesty of the Father. To her St. Francis dedicated stammering love songs, just as the Minnesingers had written to their gentle ladies, their "liebe Frouwe." In her honour the chimes of Ave Maria each evening sounded their salutation from the towers of all Franciscan churches.

Not only did Francis bring divinity nearer to mankind; he also reconciled it with the animal world and with nature. As in the days of Hellas a pantheistic trend again passed over the earth. While the middle age had seen in animals only beings inimical to God, creations of Satan, and enchanted demons, Francis calls them his "brothers and sisters." And the animals thank him for his love; the robins eat at his table, and the birds of the field listen to his sermon. In like manner he freed nature from the curse which monkish theology had spoken over her. He calls

upon the meadows and the vineyards, the fields and the woods, the rivers and the hills to praise God. For him all creation is the result of the love of God, who wishes to see men happy; who lets the spring come and the mild winds blow in order that his children here below may rejoice in them.

These changed views did not remain without influence upon art. Through Francis nature was reconciled to religion, and again became a subject of artistic glorification. Therefore, in place of the gold background which had previously served the purpose of isolating the figures of the saints from everything earthly, the landscape gradually appears: rose hedges and paradisiac gardens, where the little birds sing and animals live peaceably beside the saints. But especially from a psychic point is the change perceptible. As in the midst of the religious enthusiasm the fervent hymns of the Franciscans replaced older chants, so in painting ecstatic feeling succeeds rigid solemnity. The saints, once so gloomy and severe, became kindly and mild as the *Poverello* himself. Especially in depicting Mary and the lovely virgins of her train, art learned what it most lacked: the expression of psychic feeling.

III. Panel-Painting under the Influence of Mysticism

But the circumstance that panel-painting, which formerly had played a very modest part, now became

the determinative factor in art is characteristic of the change in emotional life. In mosaic-painting also artistic progress and animation of the figures was excluded by the technique of the work. The painter could not express himself directly, since he only designed the cartoon which served as a model for the artisans who completed the work. Now the place of this impersonal style, in whose cold material every emotion was chilled, was taken by a new technique which permitted the master to record his thoughts without an intermediary, and also to express by means of the delicate technique of the brush the finer shades of emotion.

Nevertheless, the change was in no sense a rapid one. However much art endeavoured to follow the new spirit of the times, it stood under the ban of a thousand years' tradition. Even after the appearance of Francis the Byzantine scheme prevailed, and very gradually the new sentiment breaks through traditional forms.

In older art Mary had usually been represented alone with arms raised in prayer. More rarely the theme was the Madonna with the Christ-child, although, according to the legend, the evangelist Luke had painted such a picture. But even then Mary preserved her rigid sublimity. She is seated facing the beholder—the involuntary mother of God; while He, more a miniature divinity than a child, stands solemnly upon her lap, holding in one hand a scroll, as a sign

of His office as teacher, and with the other giving the blessing.

The oldest panel paintings differ in no wise from these mosaics. Until the twelfth century it had been the custom to adorn the altars with costly reliquaries wrought in metal; and partly to preserve the metallic sheen of this decoration, partly because of the contiguity of mosaics or stained glasses, the paintings had to make the most glittering impression possible. The figures, therefore, are raised like mosaics from a gold background. Red, blue, and gold are the prevailing colours. The figures also have the solemnity of Byzantine types. The head of the Madonna, with the large almond eyes and long, pointed nose, and the indifferent manner in which she holds the Child with her elongated, bony hands, are the same in both cases; as is also true of the aged features of the Byzantine Christ-child. There is as yet no sign of any innovation or of heightened emotion.

Not until the close of the thirteenth century, in the works of the Florentine master Cimabue, is a change perceptible. The Christ-child becomes more childish and tender; and a soft inclination of the head of the Madonna shows that she hears the prayers of men and can bring them help and gracious forgiveness. The hard, sullen features are animated by softness and charm, by human sentiment; and it is in this sense that Vasari wrote that through Cimabue more love had come into art.

More tenderly than the rest of Tuscany, Siena, the quiet hill city, incorporated the mystic ideal of the Madonna. The Siennese are the first lyric painters of modern art. As they imparted to their pictures a neat and dainty element and a splendour of colour and gilding that recall Byzantine art, so also their works reflect the wealth of ecstatic feeling that had come into the world through St. Francis. While Byzantine art emphasised age, here the youthful, lovely, and graceful prevail; if there all was stormy and rigid, the prevailing characteristic here is slender, supple grace. It seems as if the stone vaults of the churches had suddenly become transparent, and the eye gazed upward into the real heaven, where tender ethereal beings, singing and praising the Highest, lived in eternal youth and lovingly gazed down upon mankind. In his great *Madonna of the Cathedral* Duccio gave the first impulse. This Mary is no longer severe and dignified, but mild and gracious, as if she had had pity upon the longing soul of the believer; for a soft dreamy melancholy transfigures her features. Her relation to the Child also is changed; she is no longer the involuntary mother of God, but a tender mother. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the gentle poet, painted her tenderly pressing her cheek against the Child's face, and giving nourishment to Him: motherly and yet maidenly, proud and yet modest.

A similar progress from rigidity to soul-painting may be seen in all subjects. Not only in the principal

THE KISS OF JUDAS

Museo del Opera della Cattedrale, Siena

figures; for in order to heighten the psychic effect painters loved to add angels and saints, whose joy or sadness harmoniously echoed the sentiment of the principal event. Formerly the *Assumption of Mary* was depicted with frosty rigidity; now gratitude and heavenly longing beam from her eyes, while the angels sing and make music, and festal jubilation pervades the pictures. In the *Coronation of Mary* nothing else had been formerly represented but Christ, stiffly seated, placing a crown upon the head of the equally immobile Madonna. Now she crosses her arms in humble ecstasy, and the Redeemer blesses her while saints and angel musicians follow the action in joyful astonishment. If the *Annunciation* is depicted, the endeavour now is to express the modesty of Mary and the childish eagerness of God's messenger. Even to the crucifixes, which were formerly frightful pictures, in awkward blurred outlines, with an uncouth, greenish body, a sacred and melancholy sentiment is imparted. Silent devotion speaks from the eyes of the Redeemer wailing or lost in the depths of melancholy his friends stand about: one pressing his hands upon his breast, another lifting them in astonished adoration, a third covering his face and weeping hot tears.

The same development was experienced during the fourteenth century in Germany; indeed, the ideals of the mystics perhaps found here their purest embodiment, since a dreamy sentimentality is more a part of the German than of the Italian character.

In Germany also, especially in Westphalia, it had been preceded by altar-pieces in the rigid style of mosaics. The position is stiff, the expression lifeless, and the forms are outlined with severe conventionality. Eyes, noses, beards, the folds of the garments, and the wings of the angels, everything—although drawn with a brush, makes rather the impression of being composed of mosaic cubes.

The schools of Prague and Nuremberg likewise made little progress beyond this. In Prague, which had become an artistic centre through Charles IV, the chief painter was Master Theodorich, who carried specifically mediæval painting to the highest perfection. All of his figures are of gloomy majesty and deep solemnity: the heads powerful, the eyes threatening, and the draperies arranged in accordance with the mosaic style. The painters of Nuremberg, indeed, attempted to follow the new spirit of the times; for their works, although commonplace and comprehensible, are softer than those of Prague. The solemn grandeur of the mediæval style is lost upon them; but to the ideals of the self-sacrificing love of God, which St. Francis had revealed, the artist of that thrifty commercial city could not honestly surrender.

As Assisi of Italian, so Cologne became the centre of German painting. It was in a peculiar sense a sacred city, hallowed by the poetry of an ancient history and the seat of the mightiest cathedral of the middle age. During the fourteenth century, it was the home

of the greatest German mystics, Albertus Magnus, Master Eckhardt, Tauler of Strasburg, and Suso—all apostles of the same doctrine which Francis had proclaimed in Italy. In Suso, especially, the seraphic saint found a successor kindred in spirit. His whole life was an eternal love struggle, his adoration of the Madonna of an almost sensual character. He calls her his heart's love, and begs that she will become his lady, because his young and gentle heart cannot exist without love. At night he longs for her and he salutes her in the morning. In the month of May, when the youths sing songs to their sweethearts, he also brings his song to the blessed one. He sees her before him in body, clothed in a long white garment, a wreath of roses in her golden hair; and hears songs like the sound of æolian harps. Just such visions, translated into painting, are the pictures of the epoch: the delicate ethereal dreams of pious visionary enthusiasts. As Mary had before been a solemn and majestic queen, she now appears as a most gracious virgin in all the charm of youth, attended like a princess by a court of well-bred maids of honour.

The founder of this new tendency was until recently supposed to have been Master Wilhelm of Cologne. But it is evident from dated panels of the school that in the years 1358–72, when Wilhelm of Herle laboured at Cologne, the school of that city still moved in thoroughly mediæval paths. The rigidly-drawn figures with angular movements and awkward hands in no

wise resemble the languishing beings with soft and oscillating bearing, so typical of the Cologne school. The actual creator of this new style was Hermann Wynrich of Wesel, who after Wilhelm of Herle's death took charge of his workshop, and dominated Cologne painting from 1390 to 1413. He, and not Master Wilhelm, is the master of the celebrated Altar of Mary in the Cathedral, which reveals with especial clearness the awakening of the new sentiment.

The paintings are not all by the same hand. The crude passion scenes of the upper row seem the work of an assistant, who painted in the old style. Wynrich painted the six middle panels in which, with delicate freshness, the childhood of Jesus is recounted. When at a later period he attempted dramatic subjects, he had little success. Only where the problem is to depict quiet Madonnas and mild womanhood his delicate lyric art is in place. The slender, fragile bodies of his Virgins, encircled by flowing garments, are quite overshadowed by the expression of their soft brown eyes, beaming with longing for the other world and for the heavenly bridegroom. The heads are inclined softly to the side; the shoulders are narrow and the chest is flat; and the weak, slender arms terminate in delicate, ethereally white hands. Even the men, although they wear beards, possess nothing of powerful manhood. They look bashfully and humbly into the world, dreamy as children, reminding one of the doctrine of the mystics that a healthy body

is the severest hindrance in the journey to blessedness. One also recognises that from this subordination of body to soul all the excellences of this art are derived. Just because Wynrich placed the bodily element in the background, he succeeded in rendering the expression of feeling with such purity and clearness. "The typical resemblance of the figures, the delicate oval of the heads, the fragile slenderness of the bodies—all serve to transport into a distant world, where everything is charming and beautiful, and the feelings are tender and refined: a paradise where neither rudeness nor discord disturbs the great harmony, the heavenly music of the spheres."

"That the landscape is occasionally called into requisition in order to heighten the paradisiac sentiment of the pictures, is also due to the teachings of the mystics. As Francis in Italy, so Suso in Germany freed nature from the curse of monkish theology. Flowers, especially roses, and beautiful gardens in which the Madonna wanders, frequently occur in his visions."

He describes Paradise as a beautiful meadow, where lilies and roses, violets and mayflowers exhale their odours, and where starlings and nightingales sing day and night their glorious melodies. Therefore Wynrich also loves to represent the Madonna out-of-doors, upon blooming meadows, escorted by dainty virgins. Sometimes St. Catherine kneels beside her in the act of betrothal with the Christ-child; sometimes it is Agnes

who plays with the lamb. Others read to her from precious books, make music, pluck flowers, or teach the Christ-child to play the zither. Knights, also, slender as maidens, join them to carry on well-bred conversation with the young ladies upon the green sward, where the flowers bloom and waft their perfume. In works of this kind the mediæval period of German art ended. They are the last echo from that world of pure harmonies which Francis and Suso had revealed.

III. The Foundation of the Epic Style by Giotto

In another direction the appearance of St. Francis was even more fruitful in consequences. Not only did he deepen by his sermons the religious life of the period, thus creating the soil for mystic painting; but by replacing the dogmatic by a personal Christ, as His earthly life had shown Him, a man among other men, he added the "Life of Christ" as a new subject of art. An epic was furnished which could be related only by painters. Especially did the life of the saint, with its self-denial and miraculous occurrences, call for presentation with epic breadth in great monumental paintings.

As the Gothic in Italy was different from that in the North, there was no lack of mural surfaces. Its principle was to vault wide interiors with great arches upon small supports; and as these broad surfaces required decoration, fresco painting became the determinative factor in Italian art.

For the legend of St. Francis there was no sacred tradition. The artists, confined for centuries to devotional pictures of Christ and Mary in which every motion, every fold of the garment had been determined by ecclesiastical prescription, suddenly found freedom in this new theme. All the scenes had to be created anew from the oral traditions of the monks or from his *Life* by Bonaventura. The problem now was to depict events and actions, instead of quiet devotional paintings. For the mastery of such things emotional ecstasy and mystic meditation would not suffice. A mighty, virile formative power, a power to create independently, and a certain realism were necessary. The substitution of an actual, almost a contemporary, subject for immutable heavenly figures meant a complete break with mediæval tradition. "It is therefore no accident that the solution of this problem was accomplished by a city which had no tradition to break, because it had stood silently aside during the middle age; not by eternal Rome, proud Venice, or mighty Pisa, but by youthful Florence, which, fresh, strong, and with unexhausted power, now took its place in the culture and art of Italy." By the side of the lyric artists of Siena and Cologne, the great Giotto arose as the epic painter; a realist among the mystics of the fourteenth century.

He won his spurs in the church which was the burial-place of St. Francis at Assisi. Giovanni Cimabue, who had been commissioned with the decoration,

had taken him, the former shepherd boy, along with his other assistants, and assigned to him, for independent execution, the pictures which adorned the walls of the upper church with scenes from the life of St. Francis. Having exercised his powers upon the new theme, and freed himself through this contemporary subject from the chains of Byzantinism, he saw also the ancient with the modern eye. The *Legend of St. Francis* was followed by a new version of the *Life of Christ*, which he painted in the Church of the Arena at Padua. After he had decorated the nether church of Assisi with frescoes of the three vows of the Franciscan order, *Poverty, Obedience, and Chastity*, as well as the *Apotheosis of St. Francis*, and had created extensive but not longer existing works in various other cities (Rome, Ravenna, Rimini, and Naples), he returned in 1334 to Florence. He was made chief architect of the cathedral and of the campanile, and also began an extensive activity as a painter in Santa Croce, the church of the Franciscans, which had just been completed. Three years after his return, on the 8th of January, 1337, his death occurred. Of him Boccaccio wrote in the *Decamerone:* "Giotto was such a genius that there was nothing in nature which he could not have represented in such a manner that it not only resembled, but seemed to be, the thing itself." And Poliziano wrote as his epitaph:

"Ille ego sum, per quem natura extincta revixit."

Such praise offered to Giotto as a naturalist seems

THE BEWAILING OF ST. FRANCIS

Fresco, Santa Croce, Florence

much exaggerated to the modern mind. For whoever approaches Giotto's works with a realistic standard derived from the style of later epochs, finds no entry into the workshop of his spirit.

True, when the problem is to depict something unusual or exotic he astonishes by a quite modern naturalism. Among the following of the Three Kings in the church of Assisi are strange examples of the Mongolian race, with flat noses, yellow skin, and ebony hair; and in like manner the heads of the Nubians in the Church of Santa Croce are astonishing in ethnographical fidelity. But that they thus impress us shows how isolated such things are in Giotto's works. Like all earlier artists he also has a prevailing type: those hard, impersonal faces, as if sculptured in wood, with protruding cheek-bones, almond-shaped eyes, and straight, Grecian nose.

The time was not yet ripe for the study of the nude. Consequently, where unclothed figures were depicted, as in the *Baptism of Christ* or in the pictures of the *Crucifixion*, the drawing is quite general.

As to costume he has in isolated cases, as in his picture of the *Adoration of the Kings*, used contemporary fashions; but only in case of figures which he wished to contrast with those belonging to specifically Christian mythology. For the saints he retains the solemn ideal costume which the middle age had adopted from the antique: the toga, tunic, and sandals, with the head uncovered.

As in the representation of man, so as a painter of animals he is far distant from truth to nature. The pointer which in one of the Paduan frescoes springs upon St. Joachim, the mule which in the same series St. Joseph rides, and the three camels in the *Adoration of the Kings* at Assisi are, as regards naturalistic execution, probably the most important that Giotto has accomplished in the domain of animal painting. The sheep, with which as a former shepherd boy he must have been familiar, are incorrectly drawn; and the horse remains for him an incomprehensible mechanism.

Even more singular are his backgrounds. The buildings, although true to nature, do not as a whole form a realistic background. Far too small, they are neither drawn in correct perspective nor in proper relation to the figures of men, who are often larger than the house in which they live. As a landscape painter he also moves along the most primitive lines. In his frescoes nature is usually composed of strangely jagged and bare cliffs, upon which here and there a tree grows, having as its only foliage at most a dozen leaves which look as if they were made of lead. The picturesque elements of the landscape—streams, valleys, hills, and woods,—its sombre and light vegetation, existed as little for him as for other painters of the *trecento*. "If thou wishest to design mountains in correct fashion, so that they shall appear natural, choose great stones, rough and unpolished, and draw them

after nature." This prescription of Cennini's is a significant document for the conception of nature during an epoch for which the tree signified the forest and the stone the mountain.

Even the colour of Giotto, however much it may differ in its light tones from the elaborate and barbaric colour of Byzantine art, is far from corresponding with reality. As he sometimes paints horses red and trees blue, so he has never attained nor even attempted to render the difference of the substances of which things are composed, or to differentiate the treatment of architecture, drapery, or flesh.

But in forming a conclusion as regards the importance of an artist, he should be compared never with later but with earlier artists. From this point of view even the extension of the subject-matter of painting accomplished by Giotto is most important. Whereas Byzantine art had only represented the regular, eternally fixed repose of the divine, and had only attempted to represent dramatic scenes in an incidental and modest fashion, Giotto was the first to depict action, and to represent not the quiet but the dramatic; not that which transcended time but what had actually happened. By substituting complete epics and dramas for representative devotional paintings, he became the first historical painter in Christian art.

Continuing the comparison with work that preceded his, one is immediately impressed by the aggregate technical means of expression which Giotto had to

create in order to found this new style. The figures are not naturalistic in detail, but he is the first to present human figures in complete action. The animals are not well drawn, but he was the first to introduce into fresco painting the representatives of the animal kingdom, from the quadrupeds to the birds listening to the sermon of St. Francis. Although his landscapes are still symbolic, it was a great step to transfer the figures from the Byzantine void into fixed earthly surroundings, and to depict them upon the earth, both in the country and in the streets and squares of the cities, in a new lifelike activity.

Finally, much that seems to offend against natural truth should be explained not so much from lack of ability as from the requirements of a great style. In the absolute certainty with which he fixed the laws of the monumental style, his real immortal greatness lies. Giotto still knew, what later painters forgot, that it is not at all the purpose of mural painting to achieve naturalistic effects in form and colour; but that it only fulfils its purpose when it remains within the bounds of pure surface decoration. For this reason his art, even in our own day, has become the starting-point for Puvis de Chavannes and others. After the development which had for centuries been directed towards realism had at length concluded, it was all the more evident that Giotto had six centuries before possessed that which we are to-day trying to attain. His whole activity was determined not by the natural-

istic but by the decorative point of view; and just because he sacrificed much of natural truth which he also might have attained, in order to achieve a monumental effect, he achieved in its very essence the purpose of decorative art.

His secret lies in the great flow of line, the clear arrangements of groups, and the severe subordination of all detail. That no belittling detail might disturb the flow of line, he chooses types which are simple and measured in feature and form. In order that the clearness of presentation might not suffer, he avoids all accessory figures, confining himself to a laconic expression of the spiritual content of his theme. As the sustained grandeur of the monumental style is not reconcilable with abrupt change and uncertain gestures, he forms for himself a fixed language of gestures, which, like the written language, always uses the same words for the same things, and thus immediately relates to the observer what the figures have to say. A significant glance, a light movement of the hand and of the body, which the loosely hanging garments freely follow, suffice to express the person represented and the emotions of his soul. As he considers mural painting simply as surface decoration, he avoids all plastic effects depending upon illusion of corporeality, and labours in the same style as the Japanese, in whose works also the figures have neither roundness nor throw shadows. The colour also is subordinated to the decorative purpose; for which reason he has no

scruples against a conscious deviation from reality, if a natural colour would have disturbed the *gobelin* tone of his paintings.

Another consequence was the adaptation of the landscape to the requirements of this style. As the landscape could not be an independent factor, but only an accompaniment to the simple lines of the figures, he confined it to the simplest forms. Giotto also knew that no human beings could live in such little houses, that trees and plants could not grow so symmetrically, and that cliffs were not formed like steps or pointed like needles; but he paints them so because he knew that a naturalistic presentation would have deviated from his aim. For if he had depicted the houses larger, his frescoes, instead of being monumental paintings, would have become architectural and historical genre-pieces in the style of Gentile Bellini. Had he not drawn his cliffs in such sharp, straight outlines, he would not have been able to separate the planes so sharply, or the different events so clearly from each other. Had he painted the trees in naturalistic fashion, they would not only have been out of harmony with the measured straight-lined figures, but the impression of solemnity achieved by his style would have been lost. Only by doing away with everything trivial and all naturalistic detail, and by simplifying nature in order that she might speak more clearly, could he give his works the firm precision and the solemn dignity demanded by the

ALLEGORY OF ENVY

Fresco in the Arena Chapel, Padua

theme as well as by the style of decorative art.

The founder of this style could only be a man of such a clear and virile mind as Giotto. It is a psychological curiosity that in the midst of such an ecstatic generation a man should live with nothing of the mystic about him. In order to recognise this trend of his character one has only to examine his Madonnas. They are far separated from the tenderness and the mystic sincerity of the Siennese and Cologne artists. A certain sobriety, ungraceful severity, and prosaic objectivity clings to them. Instead of attempting, like the others, to attain ethereal blessedness, he introduces realistic and genre features. The Christ-child sticks his finger in his mouth, plays with a bird, or is on the point of climbing into his mother's lap. The few anecdotes known from his life also point to the same double position. While glorifying the vows of the Franciscans, he was very careful that poverty should not be the chief aim of his own effort. Although a painter, he was equally successful in the most material of arts, one postulating no sentiment but only technical ability and mathematical calculation—architecture. He, indeed, painted mystic subjects, but was known among his contemporaries as a very clear-headed man, whose modern views and caustic witticisms contrasted strangely with the character of the saint, whose glorification it was his mission to celebrate.

Such also is the character of his art. It reveals, like the works of the Siennese, what depths of psychic

life were revealed by St. Francis. All the emotions of the human heart—anger and humility, love and hate, courage and self-denial—are interpreted in masterly fashion; but without mystic blessedness and with sensible objectivity. His art is cold and transparent and speaks in sentences as brief and convincing as the conclusions of a mathematical theorem. No enthusiast, but a man of positive, exact mind; no dreamer, but a powerful workman of healthy, comprehensive vitality, he determined for a century to come the development of Italian art.

IV. Fresco-Painting in the Later Fourteenth Century

After Giotto had created a language for painting, an extensive activity began throughout Italy. In Florence, the Church of Santa Croce, where he had painted his last pictures, offered a rich field of work for the younger generation, and at the same time Santa Maria Novella received its decoration. Siena, notwithstanding its lyric and mystic tendencies, also followed the spirit of the age, which had now become epic, in causing its Palazzo Pubblico to be decorated with frescoes. In Pisa, the slumbering city of decayed grandeur, the Camposanto received one of the most powerful cycles of frescoes in mediæval art. In Padua, where Giotto's work in the Arena Chapel had awakened a sense for monumental art, native artists proved their power in the Church of Sant' Antonio and in the Chapel of San Giorgio.

The names of the principal artists are: in Florence, Taddeo Gaddi, Giottino, Maso di Banco, Giovanni da Milano, Andrea Orcagna, Agnolo Gaddi, Antonio Veneziano, Francesco da Volterra, and Spinello Aretino; in Siena, Simone Martino, Lippo Memmi, Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti; and in Padua, Altichiero da Zevio and Jacopo d' Avanzo. Pisa, though once the chief seat of plastic art, produced no native painters, with the single exception of Francesco Traini, but imported foreign talent for the accomplishment of its great commissions.

After Giotto had portrayed the life of Christ and the legends of St. Francis and St. John the next step was to treat in a similar manner the entire Bible and the legends of the saints. The events of the Old and of the New Testament and the narrative of the Legenda Aurea were depicted in the same lucid style in which the sermons of St. Francis had been delivered.

Then the order of the Dominicans entered as a mighty factor into the artistic life. The Franciscans, simple men of the people, were now joined by the learned advocates of the church, whose principal mission was the scientific formulation and the strict preservation of the pure teachings of the church. The art which developed under the protection of the Dominican order is characteristic of their rigidly learned and strictly scholastic spirit. While in the Franciscan art allegories are exceptional and a simple legendary narrative is usually preserved, the chief

purpose of their rivals was to glorify in learned allegorical representations the moral and religious system of the great Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas, the prince of mediæval scholars. It is remarkable with what consecrated seriousness the artists endeavoured to translate these abstract thoughts, hardly to be appreciated by the senses, into the language of art. In the celebrated *Apotheosis of St. Thomas* by Francesco Traini it was proposed to represent in a symbolic manner the spiritual influences which the saint received from different quarters and in turn exercised upon the believers,—an effect accomplished by means of a complicated system of rays, which fall upon and issue from St. Thomas. In the cycle of frescoes in the Spanish Chapel in Santa Maria Novella the subject was the importance of the Dominican order in the history of civilisation, its scientific system, and its severe office as a guardian of truth. About the papal throne lie the "watch-dogs of Christ" (*Dominicanes*) awaiting the call to spring upon the wolves (the heretics); farther on friars are preaching and the souls converted by their labours enter the heavenly portals. As here the practical, so on the corresponding fresco the scientific activity of the order is represented. St. Thomas sits on a Gothic throne, at the foot of which the conquered heretics Arius, Averroes, and Sabellius cower. There follow, personified by female figures, the sacred and profane sciences. One of them, holding the globe and sword, represents imperial power; an-

other, with bow and arrow, the terrors of war, and a third, with an organ, is music. As earthly representatives of these allegorical conceptions the figures of men are added.

Similarly, the political allegories, such as were customarily depicted in judicial and council chambers, are usually derived from the works of the greatest poetical genius of the day, Dante. After he had furnished the ideal of civic life, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, of Siena, could paint his mural decorations in the Palazzo Pubblico, which, partly as pictures of manners, partly as an allegory, depicted the blessings of good and the evils of bad government.

The symbolic and visionary subjects portrayed at the same time as the allegories are derived partly from Dante, partly from the teachings of the two mendicant orders. As popular preachers, the friars found a reference to the last judgment and the ensuing paradise and hell to be the most effective method of moving popular feeling. One of their number, Giacomino da Verona, describes paradise as a royal court in the heavens. The patriarchs and the prophets, enveloped in green, white, and blue mantles, the apostles, seated on golden and silver thrones, and the martyrs with roses in their hair, are gathered about the Eternal One in a life of untroubled joy. At Christ's side, His enthroned mother, beautiful as a flower, is greeted by the angels with the music of harps and jubilant hymns. Hell, on the other hand, is described as a

city of the underworld, through which poisonous waters flow, and is vaulted with a metal sky. With great clubs the devils beat their victims; fire streams from their mouths; they howl like wolves and bark like dogs. In his *Divina Commedia*, Dante gave a classic form to these ideas, and fixed the dogmatic norm for art, not only for the division of the after-life into hell, purgatory, and paradise, but for the determination and infliction of eternal punishments.

To the typical representations of the Last Judgment, the artist often added, as had indeed been an earlier custom, comprehensive pictures of paradise and hell. Andrea Orcagna and the great unknown painter of the Pisan Campo Santo tower above all others in work of this kind. While in Byzantine representations of the final judgment everything is portrayed in lifeless rigidity, here the highest psychic emotion prevails. Christ is the angry judge and the Madonna is the intercessor for mankind; while the Apostles look in fearful anxiety on the great event. Hell is conceived as a section of a subterranean mountain, the cliff-like walls of which separate the different classes of sinners. The terrible figure of Satan occupies the middle of the scene; flames blaze under him, and all kinds of tortures may be discerned. Paradise, in striking contrast, is a scene of bliss and jubilation. By avoiding motion and portraying only youthful heads with beaming eyes, Orcagna has achieved a really celestial effect; even the awful tragedy of the Last Judgment is

powerless to disturb the blessed in their heavenly peace.

The allegories of death also form an introduction to these representations of the after-life. At that time famine and war had decimated the nations and the great pestilence had held its triumphant progress through Europe. Believing that God's judgment was upon them, men had learned the truth of the old doctrine that one should always be prepared to appear before the judgment seat of the Almighty. At that time originated the poem of the three dead men who appeared to the three living with the solemn warning,

> "What ye are, that we were,
> What we are, that ye shall be."

Jacopone wrote songs in which he celebrated Death, the great leveller, as the awful power which suddenly and treacherously enters flowering life. The counterpart of these poems in painting is the *Triumph of Death* in the Campo Santo of Pisa, probably the most important of all symbolic representations of the fourteenth century. Not only in his powerful formulation of the idea but also in observation of nature this master towers above the level of the school. Giotto had confined his landscapes to bare cliffs; here for the first time nature is painted in the garb of vegetation. Equally impressive is the realistic boldness with which he depicts the horses shying at the corpses or the group of maimed and crippled beggars.

A certain stylistic progress over the works of Giotto may, indeed, be observed in other paintings. Orcagna and the Siennese supplemented him in psychological analysis. While Giotto interpreted powerful sentiment with dramatic perspicuity, Orcagna paints the finer, more quiet feelings, which live half in dreamland. Even when painting the Siennese hold fast to their native sentiment, thereby surpassing Giotto in psychical expression. Instead of his energetic narrative they prefer to depict mild visions; instead of deep passion, a gentle beauty; instead of dramatic life, a sentimental tenderness.

The master who created the frescoes of the Spanish Chapel is conspicuous by reason of his realistic backgrounds. In one instance he shows a garden planted with fruit-trees and inhabited by young people picking the fruits or resting in the shade; in another, the cathedral of Florence exactly as it had been planned by contemporary architects. The school of Padua went even farther in its realism. While Giotto was content to place the figures in the same plane in the simple style of a relief, the Paduans attempted difficult problems of perspective. Their architectural backgrounds are more correctly drawn and the distant figures are more properly diminished in size. The characters, also, are conceived in a more individual, portrait-like manner, and the animals are observed as carefully as the men; as, for example, the slow and quiet tread of the oxen, which is rendered in an astonishing man-

TRIUMPH OF DEATH

Campo Santo, Pisa

ner. Even the nude, when it occurs in martyrdoms, is presented with considerable knowledge of nature.

But even in cases like these we can hardly speak of an actually realistic development. When it is recorded of a pupil of Giotto, a certain Stefano, that on account of his naturalistic style he was called the "ape of nature," this must be taken with the same reservation as Boccaccio's statement about Giotto's naturalism. A more correct characterisation is that of the commentator Benvenuto da Imola, who, in 1376 (forty years after Giotto's death), commenting on the verses in which Dante states that Giotto held the field in painting, notes: "Be it well observed that he still holds it; for since his day no greater has appeared." As in the middle ages the Byzantine, so during the fourteenth century the Giottesque style prevailed. The development consisted rather in the broadening of the subject-matter of painting than in technical improvements on Giotto. The forms which he created were sufficient for the translation of the principal spiritual ideas of the day into pictorial presentation effected by his successors. The latter approached the most obscure allegories, the most fantastic ideas of the future life, and the most learned dogmas of the church, endeavouring to express, in the language of form established by Giotto, an infinity of world-moving ideals. Few attempted the technical perfection of these forms. As during the nineteenth century in the time of Cornelius, painting was the product of an

epoch predominantly literary, so in the *trecento* the great poets and thinkers, Dante and Petrarca, swaying all minds, compelled the artist also to approach his work as a poet rather than as a painter.

Chapter III

The Aftergrowth of the Mediæval Style in the Fifteenth Century

1. The Struggle of the Old with the New Spirit

THE reaction against the thought-painting of the school of Giotto was more than necessary, it was a vital question. Instead of leaning upon the teachers of the church and the poets, painting had to learn to stand upon its own feet; instead of illustrating scholarship it had first to become mistress in its own house. That was the revolution which the fifteenth century effected. The triumphs of chastity, poverty, and of the church militant, and allegories of good and bad government, as the painters of ideas had conceived them, were no longer treated. In place of dogmatic and didactic tendencies and of literary composition, we find simple pictures which bear in themselves the justification of their existence. Artists no longer poetised but observed; they no longer painted thoughts but objects. The significance of the fifteenth century, therefore, consists in its gradual conquest of the visible world, and hand in hand with this the gradual development of the technique of painting.

The great renaissance of culture at the beginning of

the *quattrocento* directed painting along this path. The civilisation of the middle ages was altogether ecclesiastical. The church regulated the customs of the people, taught them practical things, and, as far as it thought proper, instructed them in spiritual. But gradually, as humanity grew more mature, it repudiated this tutelage as compulsion, and the unity of mediæval consciousness was lost in the breach. The senses and the intellect asserted their rights against asceticism and blind faith, and Christian humility yielded to the sense of personal strength. Instead of satisfying himself with the promise of future life, man began to establish himself upon the earth, and to make the forces and secrets of the universe subservient to him. New continents were discovered; revolutionary inventions were made in all lines of industrial activity; and it is well-known how, under the influence of these new principles, the great problem of an entire reconstruction of human knowledge appeared in the background. No less well-known are the mighty results of the collapse of mediæval ideals on public and private morals. It seemed as if suddenly the earth had been withdrawn from under the feet of mankind. All traditions which had until then the binding power were shattered, and all the shallowness of the human heart was revealed. If men had formerly considered the earthly life as a mere preparation for future happiness, they now wished to make the most of life upon the earth; if they had formerly gone about

in sackcloth and ashes, they now delighted in festivals and tourneys, in balls and mummeries, in luxury of the table and of dress. Along with the revival of the power of the senses came the rebellion against the state and the family. Writers appeared who in modern skepticism held up to laughter and scorn the system of morals enunciated by the monks and theologians. On every hand new states were formed: here monarchical despotisms of which he became the ruler who could elevate and maintain himself by force and terror; there civic republics, the victims of the wildest party strife, but at the same time flourishing through the industry of a free bourgeoisie.

The art of a nation always develops along lines parallel with its ideas, culture, and customs. It is the mirror, the abbreviated chronicle of its time. In art, therefore, the trend towards the after-life gave way to love of the present; and the worldly joy of the epoch also found its expression in painting. Just as the fourteenth century, the age of mysticism, had revealed the depths of the soul-life, so now the fifteenth takes possession of the external world; as trade and navigation had discovered new worlds, so painting discovered life. She no longer seeks to arouse contemplative and pious sentiments, but rather to mirror the external world in all of its beauty.

For such a task the technical achievements of the *trecento* were insufficient. Upon the expansion of the content of painting which it had accomplished, the

improvement of the means of representation had to follow. While the painting of the *trecento*, just because of its spiritual and didactic tendencies, had never achieved progress, the *quattrocento*, which was more modest in scope, was all the richer in purely artistic achievements. Not merely in their delight in the external world are its painters the real children of the time; but as technical pioneers they are the worthy associates of Columbus and Gutenberg. Only upon the foundations which the *quattrocento* had laid could modern painting arise.

The revolution, however, was neither abrupt nor sudden. Too many different tendencies crossed in this century for it to be called, *en bloc*, the century of realism. The materialistic current directed upon the conquest of the external world formed but a single factor in this great movement of culture. It must not be assumed that all religion was at once forgotten and all questions of feeling were at once silenced. On the contrary, the doctrines of the wretchedness of the earthly existence and salvation by faith alone still found enthusiastic apostles. At the beginning of the century stands the wonderful figure of St. Catherine of Siena; and later Fra Giovanni Dominici and St. Anthony of Padua, through their sermons and writings, awakened a new religious enthusiasm especially among women. The fifteenth century is an epoch in which the principles of two ages contend with each other—the religious ideas of the waning

middle age and the worldly delight of the modern spirit.

The same double tendency permeates painting. In contrast to the realists earnestly seeking after truth alone stand those who endeavour to unite the progress of the modern with the spirit of the middle age. While they do not scorn the technical achievements of contemporaries, neither are they ready to relinquish the heritage of the past. For them the body is still the mere tenement of the soul, the earthly chrysalis enclosing the divine butterfly. They do not, like the realist, appeal to the eye, but to the heart and the spirit. A certain archaic attitude places their pictures even in external contrast with the others. For while the fifteenth century usually substituted scenes from nature for golden backgrounds, these masters, refining the usage of the middle age, were the first to recognise the full possibilities of the use of gold in painting. They were not satisfied to retain the golden backgrounds and use gold ornaments whenever possible; but went so far as to represent certain objects, like the keys of St. Peter and the jewels in the crown of the Virgin, in high gold relief, thus giving their pictures a solemn, richly archaic effect. As late as 1430 these progressive and conservative elements co-existed, equally justified by the tendencies of the age.

II. Byzantinism and Mysticism

The most conservative city, not only of Italy but of Europe, was Venice. She felt herself the daughter of

Byzantium; for her power was principally in the Orient and her customs were Oriental. In the secluded life of the women, in the practice of the slave trade, and the costumes of the people, this was a fragment of the Orient on Occidental soil. Although a republic in name, the government was Byzantine. The power was in the hands of a few old aristocratic families who in art, as in their other opinions, were conservative. The solemn dignity and severe majesty of the Byzantine style and its dependence on rigidly traditional forms were far more in accordance with their character than an art which sought after novelties. The old was good enough. *Quieta non movere* was their motto.

But the splendour of colour and bright glitter of Byzantine painting were also pleasing to the Venetian taste. The enchanting situation of Venice between sea and land and the bright glittering wares which came from the Orient—Persian carpets, shimmering gems, and sparkling gold-ware—all of these had accustomed the eye of the Venetian to strong colour effects. Brightly-coloured marbles encrust the walls of St. Mark's and all of its cupolas are adorned with glittering mosaics. This solemn effect of gold, the severe splendour of the mosaics remained, even in the fifteenth century, their highest ideal. The Venetians, therefore, demanded of the panel picture the same splendour of colour, golden gleaming light, and solemn figures, surrounded by a trelliswork of rich ornaments, and arising mysteriously from a

golden background. Such effects had long ago been achieved by Byzantine painting.

As late as the fifteenth century Jacopo del Fiore and Michele Giambone were true representatives of this style. In their pictures saints bristling with gold and with emaciated, clumsily drawn figures appear in the midst of barbaric architecture of dazzling splendour. Archimandrites and patriarchs with long white beards, solemn as judges, raise their arms to bless the congregations kneeling in the dust. As late as 1430, and in a city of Italy, the cold and sublime spirit of Byzantinism prevailed; and with it that awfully empty and yet so powerful art, which, in its gloomy rigidity, reflects as no other does the sense of power of the mediæval church. Pictures were still painted from which one would never dream that, two centuries before, St. Francis of Assisi had preached there.

Yet during the fifteenth century, and in Venice, mysticism also experienced a fragrant aftergrowth. A series of masters appeared to depict the mystic vision of the heaven on earth revealed by Duccio, Lorenzetti, and Wynrich, with even greater tenderness and charm than did older painters with their deficient technique. In a certain sense these masters followed the modern spirit. In contrast with the *trecento*, the century of the mendicant friars, they delighted in the splendour of this world. Luxuries that were pleasing to the rich—the dainty products of the goldsmith's art, pearls and treasures—were also used to adorn the

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heavenly personages. The "Adoration of the Kings," especially, became a popular subject, because it offered an opportunity to depict, at the same time, a biblical subject and earthly pomp, pious humility and the splendour of life at court. In landscape, too, they make progress over their predecessors by the use of rose hedges, flower-decked meadows, and gaily-coloured birds singing in trellis work to attain the effect of paradise in their pictures. They even acquired the technical tricks of their contemporaries, modestly and not for dexterity's sake, but that they might, by means of these more perfect instruments, express more clearly those ideals which had justified the art of the *trecento*, those qualities in it which were eternal. As dreamers, not as observers, and with sensibility, not with the cold spirit of research, they used the new technical acquirements to reveal that great treasure of the *trecento*—the tenderness, fervour, and love which the spirit of mysticism had revealed.

As late as 1450, sacred Cologne, the home of Suso, held fast to the style founded by Hermann Wynrich. It is true that an examination of the works of Stephan Lochner, who dominated the art of Cologne from 1442 to 1451, and especially of his celebrated masterpiece in the cathedral, will reveal a certain modest appearance of mundane elements. The spiritual endeavour to effect the absorption of all earthly into the divine element is no longer the only aim. "The bodies have lost their languor, the heads are rounder; the hands

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and arms are less slender than in the earlier works. The feet, which formerly hardly dared to touch the earth, are now firmly planted. In the heads of the women the artist endeavours less to attain a modest and maidenly than a charming and arch expression. While the costumes were formerly ideal, enclosing the body in heavy masses of drapery, they now tend to follow the fashion of to-day." His language is that of a painter who with childish joy collects everything bright and sparkling to adorn his saints. Nevertheless, there is no difference in principle between his works and those of Wynrich. The innocence, blessed happiness, and spiritual beauty of the old master are to be found in these figures also. Like Wynrich, Lochner is not most at home in representing martyrdoms and dramatic incidents, but in depicting piety, humility, loving-kindness, and enchanting idyls.

The beautiful Madonna of the Archiepiscopal Museum at Cologne is evidently earlier than the altar-piece of the cathedral. The figure of Mary has the fragile slenderness of the old epoch. Her thin arms, small hands, and narrow shoulders, the stoop of the figure, and the almost girlish tenderness of the child, which in its little frock feels half infant, half Saviour, are quite in accordance with the art of Hermann Wynrich. But the head of the Madonna, with hair carefully parted and encircled with a string of pearls, and the large clasp which adorns her mantle, point to the difference in time between Wynrich and Lochner. In

like manner his *Madonna in an Arbour of Roses* treats a theme popular since Wynrich's day. Two angels draw back a curtain and the heaven in gleaming splendour is revealed. Enthroned like a king, the Christ-child sits in the lap of Mary, who, adorned with a royal crown, is seated upon a grassy ridge. Angels make music and worship her, offer fruits to the Christ-child, and break for him flowers from the rosehedge, in the branches of which little birds are singing. Although in this painting worldly joy is united with the spirit of abnegation, the dreamy longing and the heavenly peacefulness of the *trecento* hover like an echo from the other world over Lochner's work.

The note which he had struck did not sink into silence after the master's death, but echoed like a sacred peal of bells through the land. It was even brought by a pupil to Venice, and in the next paintings of the City of the Lagoons we find the solemn majesty of Byzantium combined with the tenderness and mysticism of Cologne. It is probable that the Vivarini would not have relinquished the Byzantine manner had not Antonio of Murano, in 1440, formed a partnership with Johannes de Alemannia, seemingly a Cologne artist, who in his wanderings had come to Venice. The joint activity of these artists resulted in a series of pictures which presented a remarkable combination of solemnity and youthful freshness. The golden splendour so dear to the Venetians was retained, and furthermore all the figures were adorned

with gold and with precious stones, like princes in a fairy tale. Raised golden ornaments and ancient frames, with steep Gothic gables and with flowers and trelliswork, completed the impression of Oriental splendour which reverberated like a stirring hymn through these paintings. But there is also a novel element: a touch of new psychic life and a feeling for landscape. As in the German paintings, the throne of the Madonna is erected in a secluded, paradise-like garden, where brightly-coloured birds are nesting. Instead of the mummy-like figures of Byzantinism we find the youthful blessedness, the silent purity and gentle humility of a Stephen Lochner. After having at first confined themselves to traditional representations of saints, the artists progressed to more narrative subjects. In Antonio's *Adoration of the Kings*, halos and crowns, weapons and trimmings of garments, arms and utensils, even the harness of the horses and the spurs of the riders—all appear in plastic relief. Yet the dainty, languishing figures of the youths are equally surprising by reason of their friendly and gracious charm. Here again a soft Cologne strain is curiously commingled with Byzantine splendour.

Or should we rather speak of Umbrian than Cologne influence? For there was a remarkable commingling of influences at Venice. While the painters of Murano were engaged upon their works, an Umbrian master had laboured in Venice who in the whole spirit of his art

bears a curious resemblance to Lochner. Although the efforts of Venetian painters had previously been confined to churches, the Venetian government, in 1419, determined to provide the palace of the Doge with suitable mural decoration. The subject chosen was an incident from the glorious past of Venice—the mediation of this small but powerful state between Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III. As Byzantine painting was not capable of accomplishing such a task, the choice for the artist fell upon Gentile da Fabriano, who, although modern in style, was not an iconoclast, but full of respect for ancient tradition.

The inhabitants of the mountain countries cling more tenaciously to their traditions than the inhabitants of large cities. As the mountain city of Siena had throughout the old century remained faithful to the principles of Duccio, so Umbria also, that quiet mountain district in whose valleys St. Francis had laboured, closed its doors to the modern spirit. The panels of Alegretto Nuzi and Ottaviano Nelli, the earliest Umbrian painters, echo the style of the *trecento* in tender, modest beauty; but it was reserved for Gentile to rescue Umbrian art from its provincial exclusiveness and transplant it to the soil of the cities: from the quiet chapels of distant villages to the festal halls of city palaces. The *Adoration of the Kings*, his most celebrated panel, painted in 1423 for Palla Strozzi, breathes the spirit of youth and the love of legend characteristic of the *quattrocento*. Gentile is indeed

an innovator; for the epic breadth in which he renders the entire subject is quite as characteristic of the new realism as the refined feeling for landscape with which he scatters bright flowers through the meadows. But with him realism has not destroyed poetry. An indescribable charm of youth and of grace suffuses all the precise details which he gives. Even the golden ornaments and the ancient looking frames with Gothic gables heighten the fairy-like effect. As Michelangelo observed: "*Aveva la mano simile al nome*"; and this *gentilezza*, this timid and loving manner has not lost its charm with the centuries.

Even in a large city like Florence there was a quiet and lonely cloister from whose walls all waves of the modern spirit recoiled—San Marco, the convent of the Dominicans, where the blessed Fra Giovanni da Fiesole laboured. Although no profound artist but more like a grown child in sentiment, he was yet the most lovable apparition of all these survivors of the middle age. The circumstance that he was not a native of a city, but of the village of Vicchio, and that he had lived until his fiftieth year in the hill towns of Cortona and Fiesole, is important for the analysis of his style. A man who did not come to Florence until his fiftieth year could no longer change his personality, even had he so wished. Not the contemporary masters, but the works of the past epoch, especially those of Orcagna, were his guiding star; in the middle age

lay the sources of his power. In Santa Croce and Santa Maria Novella he absorbed to such an extent the feeling of the *trecento*, that he was henceforth proof against the realistic tendences of his day.

In a certain sense Fiesole too is an innovator. His eye lingers lovingly on the landscape; the pleasing forms of mountains sometimes serve him as a background, and he never tires of painting the meadow in the garb of spring when a thousand flowers are budding. He also acquired some familiarity with perspective, and occasionally there appear in his paintings heads painted from living models.

But these things do not determine the character of his art, which in its gentle soulfulness is quite of the *trecento*, or reminds us even more, perhaps, of the most delightful of the Germans, Stephen Lochner. As in the case of Lochner, the scale of the good *frate's* feeling is not extensive; for he was himself so good that he was unable to realise the bad. As Walter von der Vogelweide has a comical effect when he attempts to swear, so Fra Angelico in depicting evil. His devils are very harmless little chaps who are quite satisfied with innocent pinching and squeezing, and do even this good-naturedly, as if ashamed of their profession. His pictures of martyrdoms create the impression of boys disguised as martyrs and executioners; and his bearded men weeping like women are equally incredible. But when he does not leave his proper sphere, and the problem is to portray tender feelings, a great

TWO DOMINICANS RECEIVING CHRIST

San Marco, Florence

and silent joy of the heart, a holy ecstasy or tender sadness, his pictures have the effect of the silent prayer of a child. And for this heavenly world, the only real world for him, he has also found the suitable, rosy, and joyful colours: a transparent blue, a jubilant red, yellow that gleams like honey, and gold which like a heavenly splendour encircles celestial beings.

San Marco owes it to him that it has become the most sacred cloister in the world. Even in the confusion of picture galleries, one forgets the world in the presence of Fiesole's pictures: whether he depicts Mary receiving in modest confusion the message of the angel; or the rich kings from afar, who, in such unbounded humility, worship the Christ-child; the kneeling Apostles thankfully and joyfully receiving the host from the Saviour; or the friends of our Lord as, thoughtful and melancholy, they assemble around the cross; fair-haired angels, who celebrate in joyous transports, with harps and song, the crowning of the Blessed Virgin; or the the elect, crowned with red and white roses, marching with stately tread to paradise. A picture of the last-named subject, now in the Berlin Gallery, is perhaps the most beautiful of his works. Since his day thousands who were far greater technicians have painted the other world, but in no paradise would one so gladly live as in Fiesole's—that beautiful, innocent world where it is always Sunday: where the child finds his toys again, the friend his friend, and the lover his mistress. These blessed

ones who gaze, astonished as children on Christmas-day, upon the glory of heaven, the mystic dances on the flower-strewn sod, the movements of the dainty, tender bodies, which revolve more melodiously, more ethereally, the nearer they approach their heavenly home—such paintings involve a world of poesy.

Even in Rome, where at the close of his life Angelico decorated the chapel of Nicholas V. with frescoes, one remains standing before his works in thoughtful reflection, after having walked through Raphael's Stanze. Here, indeed, influenced by his pupils, he used a somewhat more modern style, avoiding all archaisms and golden splendour; buildings drawn in proper perspective fill the background. But even with these concessions to the modern spirit, his native lovableness has not suffered. His old sincerity, the solemn moderation and delicacy of taste still remain. And when in the Vatican, even compared with Raphael, the art of Fiesole enchains us, it only proves something which later ages often forgot: that soul alone can speak to soul; the soul of painting, and not its form, is immortal.

III. The End of the Monumental Style

Outside of the quiet cloisters of San Marco, there was little room for mysticism in a city like Florence. The circumstance that Fiesole, himself a Dominican friar, painted not scholastic but rather mystical subjects, shows a certain progressive tendency which is characteristic. As in the four-

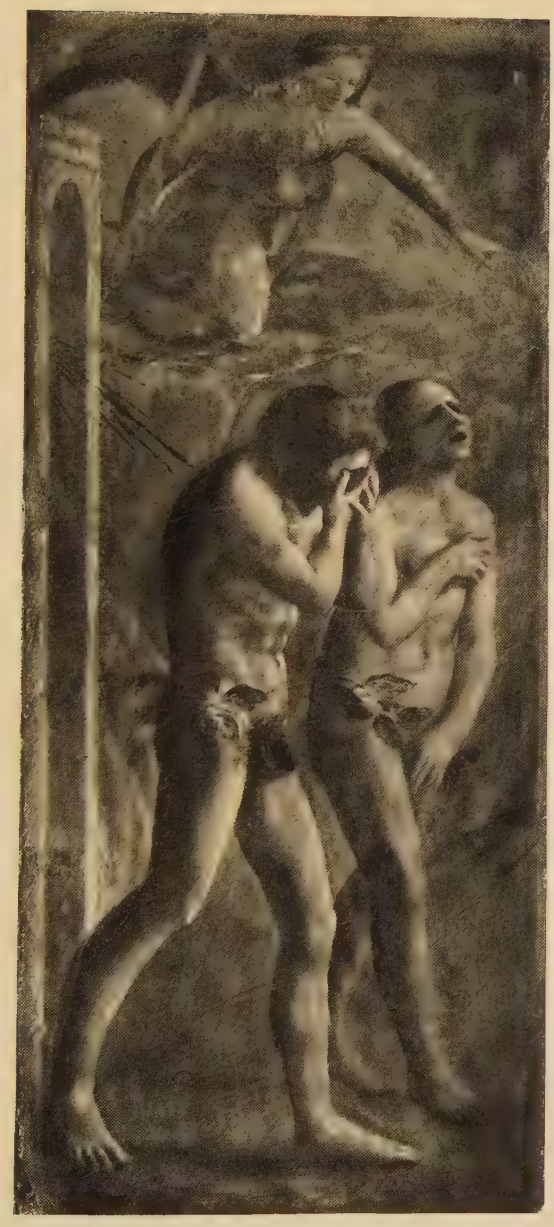
teenth century Florence was the soil from which the virile and objective art of Giotto grew, so in the fifteenth it produced a painter who bears the same relation to Fiesole that the epic and serious Giotto bore to the gentle and dreamy Siennese. Giotto born again and beginning at the point where death had cut off his development--such is Masaccio. He it was, and Masolino, who conducted the school of Giotto into the fifteenth century.

From an external point of view (he was a pupil of Starnina) Masolino is connected with the school of Giotto. His frescoes in San Clemente at Rome are distinguished from the works of the Giotteschi by a more lively feeling for reality, a softer expression in the heads, and less stiffness in motion. There is something innocent and pure in the expression of the figures, and the whole character of presentation is strikingly simple and natural. A member of the painters' guild of Florence in 1423, he received in the same year the commission to decorate the chapel of the Brancacci in Santa Maria del Carmine, dedicated in the preceding year, with frescoes of the *Life of St. Peter.* On the wall to the right he painted a large picture representing the *Healing of the Lame Man* and the *Raising of Tabitha,* on the pilaster to the right the *Fall of Man,* and on the window wall *Peter Preaching,* From these works also an artist speaks to us who originated in the school of Giotto, but endeavours to enliven and change its style.

In the chief fresco, beside the ideally clothed group of Apostles, two Florentines, in dapper costume of the day, cross the street. The relation of the figures to the building is more correct in perspective than Giotto ever achieved, and the nude, in the case of Adam and Eve, is more correctly drawn than in preceding works.

In his later paintings he endeavours even more energetically to attain liveliness of expression and fresh episodic narrative. Especially the frescoes of the *History of John the Baptist*, painted in 1428–45 at Castiglione d'Olona, involve a wealth of lively, piquant traits. The heads of the men are partly portraits, and in the women, who in Giotto's work have a rather sullen and hard expression, a delicate feeling for beauty and a refined sense of worldly charm appear. In the picture of the *Baptism of John* he has portrayed the nude bodies of the converts, even in the most difficult postures, with astonishing sureness. Considering also the modern costumes—the curious caps, short mantles, and sumptuous fabrics—it must be conceded that the artist has almost entirely broken with the taste of the *trecento*. Only the rigid landscapes, composed of a series of bare cliffs, follow the earlier style.

Following a call to Hungary in 1425, Masolino broke off his work in the Brancacci Chapel, which was taken up by Masaccio. On the pilaster to the left, the latter depicted the *Expulsion from Paradise*; on the altar-wall the *Contribution of Alms* and *Peter*



THE EXPULSION FROM PARADISE

Fresco in the Brancacci Chapel, S. M. del Carmine, Florence

Visiting the Sick; and on the wall to the left the *Tribute Money* and the *Raising of the King's Son.* By virtue of these works Masaccio is now generally celebrated as the real founder of the new style. Let us consider with what justice.

It is true that his pictures contain a wealth of new elements. Contrasted with the frightened couple fleeing from paradise, followed by the angel with drawn sword, the works of Masolino seem mere awkward designs. In the *Tribute Money* the image of Peter, throwing back his mantle and bending over to seize the fish with such eagerness that the blood rushes to his face, was long ago praised by Vasari because of its striking realism. In the picture of the *Raising of the King's Son* the figure of the kneeling youth early became an object of admiration and of copying, because of the sure mastery of the nude displayed. While Masolino's buildings seem laboriously constructed, Masaccio has, apparently without effort, achieved the harmonious relations which appear in space. Whereas the former, as a disciple of Cennini, still retains the rigid, cake-like forms of mountains, the latter portrays, for the first time in art, the quiet lines of the valley of the Arno. The difference in colour also deserves attention. Masolino still preserves the pleasing rosy tone which Giotto loved; but Masaccio has adopted a more powerful colour scheme, which no longer endeavours to attain the effect of faded gobelins but aims at natural truth. It is also customary

to emphasise, as a characteristic of his realism, an external feature, the treatment of the halo. While in the older style, even in the case of Masolino, the halo appears as an immovable circle about the head of the figures, Masaccio treats it as an actual disc suspended horizontally above the head, and participating in all the movements of the body.

The question at issue, however, is whether it was in these innovations that Masaccio's greatness consisted; whether his works should be considered as paradigms of Renaissance painting. Episodic details, contemporary fashions, and portrait heads, which appear so numerous even with Masolino, are justly considered innovations of the *quattrocento;* but Masaccio has none of these. He makes a very limited use of portraits, merely venturing to place his own among the Apostles. Far from giving a literal reproduction of his model, he ennobles and idealises, he raises individual to majestic qualities. Contemporary costumes, which appear but seldom in his paintings, are restricted to the spectators; while the saints, as in the earlier period, wear the antique toga, the drapery of which he models with simple grandeur. Genre episodes and conspicuous *tours de force* in perspective do not appear; not that he does not understand how to solve difficult problems, but rather shuns them in order not to disturb the great, quiet harmony of his work. Even in landscape backgrounds he avoids all naturalistic detail, confining himself to simple and majestic lines.

Masaccio's greatness lies not in his realism, but rather in the quiet repose, the grandiose simplicity, and the solemn style of his work. Although combined with more technical ability, his is still the heroic style created by Giotto a hundred years before. It is no accident that the masters of the *cinquecento* chose Masaccio as their leader. When the reaction against the naturalism and detailed realism of the *quattrocento* began, the young painters thronged to the Brancacci Chapel as to a university. Here Michelangelo received from Torregiani the well known blow that flattened his nose, and Raphael made those copies which he afterwards used in his Roman frescoes. It was not the realist in Masaccio that they admired, but the qualities of Giotto which he had preserved for modern art—the sustained grandeur and the impressive dignity of his style.

Parallel with Masaccio in this regard are the works of a northern master, who, like a solemn patriarch of a bygone age, lives on into a new epoch—Hubert van Eyck. Of equal importance with the Brancacci frescoes for Italian art were the monumental figures of the Ghent altar-piece for northern art.

Like Masaccio, Hubert van Eyck belongs as a technician to the new epoch. He in particular made practicable the use of a vehicle for the expression of that natural truth which the new epoch demanded: colour. The light, pale, bodiless tints of the earlier artists sufficed as long as the problem of painting was

confined to the expression of purely visionary effects; they were insufficient as soon as real illusion and striking natural truth were required. The most varied experiments in colour were therefore attempted throughout the century. On the one hand, the ancient tempera technique was raised to new perfection; not in measured harmonies, but by placing the colours side by side, full, powerful, and bright, thus achieving by contrast a heightened effect. On the other hand, the invention of oil painting supplied a vehicle even more pliant for the new requirements; to have first used this technique in panel painting was the achievement of the great master of Maaseyck.

It is not known whence he came, nor can his development be traced in any youthful works. When he began the work with which his name is for all time connected, the altar-piece of Ghent, he was nearly seventy years of age,[1] and he left it for his brother to complete. It is even questionable how far the altar-piece as it is seen to-day corresponds with the plan of the original designer. Only one thing seems certain—that the panels of *God the Father*, *Mary*, *John the Baptist*, and the *Angels making Music* are by the hand of Hubert.

Most astonishing is the artistic power which the work reveals. The blue, green, and red mantles enveloping the figures as in flames; the shimmering

[1] This computation would place Hubert's birth about 1356 (for he died in 1420), antedating by ten years the earliest estimates of his birth year hitherto reached (including Professor Muther's).—Ed

tiara studded with diamonds, pearls, and amethysts; the sceptre adorned with precious stones, and the heavy brocaded garments of the angels; the glittering agraffes, the sheen of the oak-wood and the gleam of the organ pipes—such effects of colour an earlier painter would have attempted in vain to produce.

In like manner does his draughtsmanship far excel that of an earlier period. The figures are seated as if they were actual bodies, not ethereal spirits, but corporeal beings of flesh and blood. He has even deprived the angels of their shadowy qualities and placed them in the choir of St. John's church, where the tones of the organ peal forth and the music of viols and harps sounds.

Yet the parallel with Masaccio is a correct one; for the naturalism and the splendour of colour of the new epoch are interwoven with the sublimity of the mediæval style. However material the figures may be, they hover beyond all earthly reach; however well painted and designed, the impression they give is less one of the *quattrocento* than of those solemn saints who, encircled by the splendour of mosaics, sit enthroned in the apse of early Christian churches. As in Italy, so in the Netherlands there flourished during the middle age a great monumental style, of which Hubert's works are but a reflection. Mighty sublimity, simple grandeur, and consecrated dignity—such are the epithets which best characterise his panels. Their intimate relation to the works of Masaccio is also

shown by their effect upon succeeding generations. The painters of the *quattrocento* had forgotten Hubert van Eyck; but when the passion for naturalism had been satiated, and the yearning for a monumental style returned, a great German stood reflecting before the altar-piece of Ghent. In the presence of Hubert's *God the Father*, Dürer first conceived his *Four Apostles*.

Book III
The Renaissance

Chapter II

Nature and Antique

I. The First Realists

UP to this time, the art of the fifteenth century had presented nothing new. Although it had indeed acquired a better draughtsmanship and created new means of expression in colour, its style thus far had remained that of the past. Not until art had definitely broken with tradition, until there had been an after development of the mediæval style from Byzantinism through Mysticism down to the monumental art of Giotto, did painting turn into new paths. Artists then appeared who, unconnected with the past, began quite anew, as if the use of brush and colour had just been invented for them. Change followed change, and a revolution occurred, more rapidly perhaps than any in our own nervous century.

The subject-matter of painting indeed remained ecclesiastical; for the Church was still the principal patron of art. But as the artists were not permitted to paint earthly subjects without a biblical mask, their worldly tendencies found satisfaction in another way: by making all religious painting worldly.

Giotto had avoided portraiture, and Masaccio

confined himself to portraying himself and Masolino among the spectators in the *Tribute Money*. Now, at one sweep, all paintings are filled with portraits. Not satisfied with inserting their own into biblical pictures, artists even added, in life size, the portraits of the donors, which had formerly appeared either not at all or else in very diminutive size. Man no longer felt himself a dwarf in the presence of the saints, but as an equal among equals. They then went further, introducing their friends and protectors as patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs among biblical scenes. The final step was to deprive the saints of their supernatural character. All beings who had formerly lived in the domain of idealism were changed into men of flesh and blood, to be distinguished from others only by the halo above their heads.

This resemblance is by no means confined to the heads, but extends also to the costumes. The *quattrocento* was perhaps the most splendour-loving epoch in the history of civilisation; a century inexhaustible in the invention of new fashions, which allowed no edicts against luxury to rob it of its pleasure in the toilet. All these bizarre fashions were adopted by art. While Masaccio, following the principles of Giotto, had enveloped most of his figures in flowing draperies resembling those of the statues of the antique orators, in contrast to this ideal style the art of the following epoch creates the impression of a great book of fashion plates. Delighting in the smallest detail of costume

artists furnished even the saints with the most piquant toilettes: coquettish little cloaks trimmed with feathers, and impossible head-dresses. An exquisite dandyism seemed to have affected the inhabitants of heaven as well as of this world. If the picture represents a Madonna, an earthly family-scene is actually portrayed. Mary has laid off the hieratic costume; her hair is coquettishly dressed and she wears a tight bodice with rich border and adorned with delicate needlework. The Christ-child holds a starling or a flower, listens to the word of his mother or lies on her breast; and it became a favourite practice to give him the infant St John as a playfellow. Purely genre scenes took the place of devotional pictures. The *Adoration of the Kings* was converted into a complete picture of contemporary manners; the kings of Bethlehem are princes of the *quattrocento*, attended by a rich train of men at arms and Oriental slaves, just as they would appear in making a visit to a foreign court.

As the episodes were transferred to the immediate present, since only the present seemed true and beautiful, so the most different elements were introduced, things having no connection with the principal event and owing their existence solely to the pleasure which the artist took in the beauty of the world: here an amusing episode, there some graceful animal like a bird, a hare, a monkey or a dog; there again, flowers and fruit. Pleasure, splendour, riches, everything but piety is characteristic of these pictures. Every-

thing beautiful that life offered is woven into bright and gleaming nosegays.

Even the technical execution betrays to what extent earthly joy predominated over religious feeling. The care with which the principal figures are executed is extended to the smallest detail. While in the pictures of the *trecento*, even with Fiesole and Masaccio, the accessories played no part, but were indicated only when they served to make the principal event clearer, now vessels, carpets, arms, and flowers are executed with such care as if the subject were an independent still-life. The result is that the art of the *quattrocento*, although the subjects are biblical, nevertheless involves the entire profane painting of later centuries; and that in these works, even though they represent saints, the whole epoch with its people, costumes, arms and utensils, dwelling rooms and buildings, lives on as in a great picture-book of the history of civilisation.

The backgrounds of these paintings also show a radical innovation. In contrast to Giotto, who had indicated the scene of action by conventional forms of buildings and cliffs, and to Lochner, who had constructed ideal gardens of hedges and roses, the artists of the *quattrocento* conceived the actual earth as the natural home for their very human saints. The rooms in which they lived are the same which may still be found in ancient cities; rooms with heavy wooden ceilings, panelled walls, majolica tiles, and carved furniture. The landscapes through which they stride

are the same upon which the sun still shines. Whereas Masaccio, Lochner, and Fiesole had confined themselves to powerful lines and modest suggestions, those who followed never tired of a circumstantial description of all details. The background is filled with buildings, views of cities, towers and palaces, sometimes crowning the ridge of a mountain, sometimes extending into fertile plains. Even in interior scenes there is usually a view through a window upon woods, meadows, rivers, and hills. Much more is given than the eye can discern in nature. Hazy and melting effects do not exist for the sharp eye of these painters. Not only are the grass and flowers of the foreground painted stem for stem and leaf for leaf; but even in the far distance objects retain equally sharp outlines and colours.

Although this may often seem unnatural to the modern eye, we can easily understand the feelings that swayed the artists. The logical reaction against an art to which natural scenery had for so long been strange, and which permitted only golden backgrounds, was just such a richly detailed landscape, which in its reverential pantheism thought the smallest leaf with its sparkling dewdrop equally important with the proud palm, and the pebble with the mighty cliff; which would not permit cloudy atmosphere to darken the brightness of things; and which in a single work would fain have sung the whole richness of form and colour in the universe. Even the church reconciled itself with the new views. When Raymond of Sabunde, in his

Theologia Naturalis, taught that nature was a book written by the finger of God, he gave its blessing to the worldly delight of the age and to the efforts of the artist to depict it.

As the altar-piece of Ghent is the last echo of the mediæval conception of art, so it is also the first classical expression of the new worldly style. Although Jan van Eyck was but twenty years younger than Hubert, a whole world seems to separate him from his brother. The solemn, ideal style of Hubert is of the middle age; but the art of Jan is firmly planted in the soil of modern times. That he completed the altar-piece of Ghent as Hubert had originally planned it, seems very doubtful. Even from the panels in which it was necessary for him to follow his brother's designs, another spirit speaks. As he could never have created the three mighty central figures of the altar, he was also unable to attain his brother's excellence in the panel of the *Singing Angels* which he painted as a pendant to Hubert's *Angels Making Music*. With Hubert not only the faces but the hands also are inspired with nervous life; through these nimble fingers the spirit of music streams. But in Jan's *Singing Angels*, however highly Karel van Mander praises them, the faces are spiritless, the hands are clumsy and badly drawn. He possessed neither the spiritual greatness and the serious thoughtfulness of his brother nor his plastic sense for the organic construction of the body. Even in the panels, which in accordance with the plan of the

GIOVANNI ARNOLFINI AND HIS WIFE
National Gallery, London

altar had to be rendered in large form, he speaks to us as a miniature painter whose eye rests only upon the coloured surface of things.

His figures of the *Two Donors* are the first real portraits in modern art. They are genuine types of the sterling burgher class which had made Flanders the wealthiest country of the earth: the husband a wealthy and rather dull *bon vivant*, who after the day's successful labour has settled himself to repose; his wife a true mistress of the house, with the highly respectable features of a lady used to command. In the panel of the *Annunciation* he places the chief emphasis upon the still-life—a room containing a washbasin and all kinds of household furniture, and with a view through a window upon the street. In the figures of *Adam and Eve*, he does not strive, like Masaccio, after great lines and spiritual content, but confines himself to reflecting with photographic accuracy the sunken breast and the prominent abdomen of Eve, the hair of Adam's legs, the pale colour of the skin of the body, and the darker hue of the hands.

He was not in his real element until he painted the lower panels with the many small figures: the *Adoration of the Lamb*, the *Just Judges* and the *Soldiers of Christ* the *Holy Anchorites and Hermits*. Thus, indeed, are the panels inscribed; but from the figures themselves it would be difficult to surmise a biblical significance. They are men of flesh and blood, in no sense resembling the ideally

draped and spiritual beings of the older epoch. On one side he has painted the Burgundian princes riding with their train to the hunt; on the other, monks and beggars, the rabble of the road, as with swollen feet, sunburned faces, and care-worn brows, they stride over the stony soil.

Even more fascinating than the people is the landscape. The sky is no longer golden but blue, and the grass-covered sod stretches far into the distance. Daisies, anemones, violets, dandelions, strawberries, and pansies are in bloom; in the bushes the roses glow; cypresses, orange and pine trees tower aloft, and in dark arbours purple grapes shimmer.

This southern character of nature at the same time calls to mind why Jan was destined to be the father of landscape painting. He may have derived the first impulse from the miniature-paintings; for the novelties which he introduced into the altar-pieces had long been customary in illuminated manuscripts, which as an aristocratic luxury might possess greater wealth of detail and maintain a more worldly character than religious panels. In his position as *valet de chambre*, he probably saw many a *Book of Hours* which was inaccessible to ordinary mortals; and what he learned as a court painter was used for the benefit of the good donor of the altar, Jodocus Vydt. But the determining active factor was another event in his life. Wide travel necessarily directs the attention to the strange things in the new surroundings. The

air appears bluer, the distant view awakens a more sentimental mood, and the earth seems more beautiful. Things passed listlessly by at home suddenly acquire a new meaning. As in the nineteenth century artists made pilgrimages to Italy, Norway, and the Orient before depicting their native home, so for Jan van Eyck a journey which in 1428 he made to Portugal in the service of the Duke of Burgundy proved a revelation. In southern climes nature was more fully revealed to him, and upon his return home he enthusiastically embodied in his paintings the memories of what he had seen in foreign lands.

In his independent works he followed even further his personal inclinations. While Hubert, as the offshoot of the old monumental painting, depicted only the sublime and always maintained a solemn tone, Jan, as a descendant of the miniaturists, is the painter of detail *par excellence*; the unsurpassed ancestor of all Fortunys and Meissoniers, who, in his small cabinet pictures has created works as delightful in workmanship as they are delicate in colour. His little Madonnas, indeed, make no attempt to awaken pious sentiment. If the older masters attempted to ascend to heaven, Jan brought heaven down to earth; if they had visions of the other world, Jan painted simple episodes of life.

While the painters of Cologne drew all figures tall and slender, like the soaring pillars of Gothic architecture, Jan van Eyck painted them heavy-set; and

in order to create a suitable background, instead of the soaring Gothic, he used the massive Romanesque style. In their works a heavenly longing gleams in Mary's eyes, but Jan paints her as a healthy Flemish mother. With them the figures lived in Paradise, with him in the midst of a joyous reality. Sometimes he reveals Mary in the interior of a church, in which an architectural perspective, with the interesting effects of light streaming through stained glass windows, opens to view; sometimes the background is a simple living room, affording the opportunity of reproducing a veritable still-life of pewter dishes, lamps, tankards, gleaming water-bottles and carpets; or again she stands in the open air and the eye beholds churches, palaces, gardens, streams, market-places and streets in the distance. It is astonishing how upon a bit of canvas of the size of a hand he can produce the effect of furthest distance; with what fidelity he renders the sheen of metal, every blade of grass in a landscape and the very dewdrop upon it; and lets the light play and shimmer on shining armour, a crystal globe or a piece of goldsmith's work.

It might even be said that little pictures of this kind form the culmination of the entire technical skill of the northern art during the middle ages. For the fascinating quality of Gothic buildings, tabernacles, pulpits, and baptismal fonts of the fourteenth century is neither the harmony of proportion, purity of line, nor delicacy of decoration; but rather the incredible

skill with which the fretwork, rosettes, and other decorative features are carved and fitted together just as if the material were not hard stone, but soft enough to be kneaded in the hand. Now in the fifteenth century these manual gymnastics redounded to the benefit of painting. After the eye had once accustomed itself to the actual forms of nature, the hand was soon able to master them with the juggling surety of the Gothic architects in stone.

But a glance at Italy will show that it would not be correct to regard miniature painting as a specifically northern peculiarity. It was a natural reaction from the monumental style of the earlier epoch, and therefore found as enthusiastic followers in Italy as in the Netherlands. The qualities which in the north are attributed to Jan van Eyck are identified in the south with Pisanello. It is not impossible that there was a mutual influence, since, according to the account of Facius, painters from the Netherlands were active in Verona. At all events, Pisanello is as nearly related to the Netherlander as he is different from his countryman Masaccio. Where the latter rendered only ideal types, Pisanello paints his contemporaries; and whereas Masaccio retained the ideal costume of Giotto, Pisanello never tires of depicting small cloaks, hosiery, enormous hats, and dainty pointed shoes. The delight of the *quattrocento* in the wardrobe now finds place in sacred pictures. Smiling landscapes stretch before us, and,

as in the case of Jan van Eyck, animals move and live among the biblical figures.

The frescoes which he painted in Verona differ as widely from those of the Brancacci Chapel as the lower panels of the altar-piece of Ghent from the monumental figures of the upper row. They are the works of an interesting charmer, who expresses neither spiritual nor formal thoughts, but who observes men and things with a refined and refreshing glance. Instead of biblical stories he portrays knightly processions and hunting expeditions. Partridges, dragons, dogs, and horses are mingled in the respectable assembly of saints, who in their dandified, tight-fitting clothes seem personages from Boccaccio rather than the Bible. In their visit to the Christ-child, his three kings have brought along all their pages, equerries, hunting dogs, and falcons, and appear in a landscape of the Lake of Garda rich in villas, vineyards, herds of sheep, and birds flying about. His *St. George*, in a cuirass and with an enormous felt hat, resembles a *condottiere* of the fifteenth century; while *St. Hubert*, the mighty hunter, only affords him an opportunity to populate a thick wood with dogs, hares, rabbits, and bears. Even his drawings betray that he was at heart more an animal than a biblical painter.

Finally he resembles Jan van Eyck in this respect, that he was the first to paint purely profane pictures and to elevate portraiture to a separate branch, equally justified with religious painting.

Before the fifteenth century portraiture did not exist. Sovereigns alone had the right to be immortalised in statues and mosaics, and portraits were only permitted as plastic decoration of tombs. The spirit of the new epoch first awoke in the fourteenth century. Men wished to leave behind them traces of their earthly career, to hand down their names and effigies to distant generations, and thus achieve immortality on the earth. On a wall in the Bargello, Giotto depicted the poet of the *Divine Comedy* among the blessed in Paradise, and it is related of Simone Martino that he went to Avignon of his own accord in order to portray Petrarca. But Giotto's picture is rather silhouette than portrait, and an idea of the portraiture of Simone Martino is furnished by his fresco of Guidoriccio Fogliani de' Ricci, which certainly does not greatly resemble the original. Art was yet too much swayed by the typical to succeed with the individual characterisation.

In the fifteenth century, not only had the love of fame grown to such an extent that every rich citizen henceforth felt the need of handing down his lineaments to posterity, but art had now acquired the ability to portray them with strict fidelity to nature. In Italy it became the vogue to adorn mantels and friezes with colored portrait busts; or at least to preserve likenesses on a bronze medal.

To Pisanello belongs the fame of having, upon the basis of memorial coins, revived the medallist's art,

and of having applied the style of the medal to painting. As the medal is based upon a negation of depth, his painted portraits are confined to the profile view, the heads being drawn with plastic severity. In place of the metal background of the medal, he used a carpet-like ornament of a monochrome mass, upon which the profile is firmly planted.

In the Netherlands there was no such connection with the medallist's art, and the portrait of Jan van Eyck consequently differed from Pisanello's in that they never presented the heads in profile, but in three-quarters view. While the Italian draws the characteristic line, the Fleming paints the coloured surface. Common to both, however, is the endeavour to present human physiognomy with the uncompromising reality and the unbounded exactitude of the photographic apparatus. As landscape painters, who had formerly been permitted to render golden backgrounds only, now painted every pebble, leaf, dewdrop, and blade of grass, so portrait painters, who had previously been confined to general types, now delighted, with veritable passion, in crisp details, such as wrinkles, furrows, warts, and stubs of beards. Even in the choice of models they proceeded in accordance with this point of view. For while they seeem to have avoided youthful portraits, both male and female, the shrivelled heads of old men and women are subjects after the heart of these realistic artists. Think of the rugged old man in the Berlin Gallery, holding with comic

earnestness a pink in his hand[1]; or the strange head of Arnolfini, particularly in his *Betrothal* in London which, with its rich accessories so illustrative of the customs of the day, already contains the germ of later genre painting.

The development progressed along the same lines. Now that painting had discovered the poetry of the earthly, it could not remain where Jan van Eyck and Pisanello had left it. Their dainty, trifling miniature art had to be changed into serious painting, no longer confined to coloured surfaces, but which should discover the reality of things, and thus justify scientifically the existence of realism. In these further investigations the Netherlanders took no part.

After the founders of the school had given such an important impulse by the perfection of oil painting, their followers confined themselves to working on in the style of the van Eycks.

The works of Petrus Christus offer nothing not already contained in those of Jan. He appropriated the models of his master and the furniture of his studio, adopting whole figures of Jan's pictures in his own. As in the Frankfort Madonna he used Jan's Turkish carpet and the figures of Adam and Eve of the Ghent altar, so in the Madonna at Burleigh House he copied the Carthusian monk of the Rothschild Madonna. An interesting subject, because no similar work of Jan's

[1] The pink, which had at that time just been introduced into Europe, created a similar sensation to that caused by the orchids in our own day.

survives, is his *St. Eligius* at Cologne; it shows what worldly and purely pictorial points of view then determined the choice of subjects. The artist desired to paint gleaming objects like golden tankards, beakers, necklaces, aigrettes, and wings; and as this could not yet be done in the form of pure still-life, he remembered good old Eligius, and placed him, purely as a matter of form, in the foreground.

While he lived at The Hague Jan van Eyck may have also had a determinative influence upon contemporary Dutch painting. At any rate Albert Ouwater's masterpiece, the *Resurrection of Lazarus*, is quite in the manner of his school. Like Jan he has placed the scene in a Romanesque cathedral, and the daintiness and repose of the figures, who are in no wise disturbed by the miracle, are equally reminiscent.

Although Dirk Bouts is reputed to have improved upon Jan in landscape, his panels of the altar at Louvain indicate no progress from elaboration to greater intimacy. On the contrary, Bouts even adds details and piles the most arbitrary objects upon each other. It is curious to note how with him the spirit of realism led to the fantastic landscape. The artist felt that biblical scenes should not occur in the Netherlands; and as he distinguished the figures as Orientals by turbans or other Eastern head-dresses and curious arms, so also he sought to give the landscape an exotic character. For Jan van Eyck, who had travelled widely, this was easy enough—he simply gave Portugal

as the Orient; but Bouts, who had never left home, had to invent. As Holland was such a flat and level country, he thought the Orient must be mountainous; and he believed that by painting the opposite of what his home offered he could most correctly achieve the real character of biblical scenes. Another innovation by him is the endeavour to interpret certain effects of light. In contrast to Jan van Eyck, who painted everything in broad daylight, Bouts has in his *St. Christopher* depicted the background of the reddish light of the rising sun, while a ravine in the foreground is still enveloped in the darkness of night. In his *Christ Taken Prisoner* he has even attempted a problem not again ventured upon until it was attempted two centuries later by Elsheimer; while the background shows the pale light of the moon in a nightly sky, the figures are enveloped by the glare of torches.

But even such achievements only indicate progress along the old path, and no diverging road. The appearance of Jan van Eyck was so sudden, and so far did he reach into the future, that those who came after had quite enough to do to hold the field which he had conquered. It is true that in the Netherlands great personalities still appear who even enter into the drama of European art; but as they march alone, there is no co-ordination of labour or logical development of art. A real evolution of art during the fifteenth century exists only in Italy.

III. Storm and Stress in Florence

In Florence, especially, all the conditions for the logical development were present. Here, where Cosmo de' Medici was at the head of the state, and where the Strozzi, Bardi, Rucellai, Tornabuoni, Pitti, and Pazzi sought, by the patronage of art, to emblazon recent coats of arms, there were such commissions for painting as were given nowhere else in the world. But Florence had also become the scientific centre of Italy, and the great scholars, anatomists, and mathematicians whom the Medici had summoned thither worked hand in hand with the artists. A scientific spirit pervaded art, the only spirit capable of solving all the purely technical problems which the century proposed. Simply because in Florence artists laboured who, more as scholars than as artists, dedicated themselves with fanatic eagerness to the solution of the different problems, and made it a life work to penetrate into the formative workshop of nature, could the painting of the *quattrocento* make such rapid progress. Only upon the foundation which these Florentine investigators had laid could the structure of modern painting arise.

The first important problem was perspective—the problem with which the early period had most clumsily striven. Giotto always failed in attempting to divide his figures among several planes and to place them in correct relation to the buildings. With however much genius Masaccio solved the problem, he did so by arbitrarily following his own feelings. Such experi-

ments had to be replaced by clear, scientific knowledge. As the correct proportions of the figures in space as well as the further development of landscape painting was only possible after the laws of perspective had been established, the foremost minds of the day proceeded to devote themselves to this subject.

Brunellesco, the great architect, laid the foundation. Assisted by the mathematician Paolo Toscanelli, he established as the first principle that objects appear smaller in accordance with their distance from the eye, and offered the proof in a drawing of the piazza in front of the Baptistery. The way being thus paved, his conclusions were followed further. In his first book on painting, which was devoted mainly to the laws of perspective, Leon Battista Alberti put in writing all that had heretofore been orally transmitted, and invented the scheme of quadrates which enabled the artist to solve the most complicated problems with mathematical exactness. The origin of a special profession, that of the *prospettivista;* the facts that, in the coloured incrustation of furniture, representations were for a long time popular which were nothing more than perspective paradigms, and that Ghiberti even treated reliefs as pictures with a background in perspective—these are further examples of the importance which the *quattrocento* ascribed to the new science.

Paolo Uccello used these achievements as a starting point in painting. According to Vasari, he received the appellation Uccello because, notwithstanding his

poverty, he possessed an entire menagerie, including a collection of rare birds. In his study of animals, so characteristic of the *quattrocento*, he is therefore related with Pisanello. His principal activity, however, consisted in the establishment, in connection with his friend the mathematician Manetti, of a system of the rules of perspective. It is touching to see a workman of this calibre becoming a fanatic over his problems, forgetting the whole world and brooding through whole nights over his investigations. What cares he for life or for painting! If it is in any wise possible he paints his pictures in monochrome, and if he must carry them out in colour, it is immaterial to him whether his horses are red or green. The life work which fate has decreed for him is only the solution of problems of perspective.

Thus in his fresco of *The Flood* in the cloister of Santa Maria Novella, he does not paint the terrors of an inundation of the world, as any pupil of Giotto could have done; but he attempts the solution of problems which, chosen only for their difficulties, make the entire painting seem an illustration for a text-book of perspective. In the pendant representing the *Sacrifice of Noah* he causes a being supposed to represent God the Father to fall headlong from the clouds—for the sole purpose of determining how a person who had suddenly fallen from a scaffold would appear if he remained suspended in space. His battle-pieces, too, seem strange to the modern eye. The weirdly-coloured, thick-necked horses, rearing or lying stiff

upon the ground, resemble the horses of a merry-go-round more than real animals.

But the word battle-piece calls to mind what a great revolution we now witness. The very fact that such profane objects could be painted reveals the seven-league strides of the time. When we reflect that Uccello had no predecessor in this field, and that what he attempted was not again taken up until Raphael and Titian did it in the sixteenth century and Salvator Rosa and Cerquozzi in the seventeenth, we cannot but recognise the historical importance of this keen and fanatic mind. No great conquest is accomplished at one blow, and it is more meritorious to attempt new problems than to imitate perfectly the traditional. It is due to such minds as Uccello's that Florentine painting did not remain stationary like the Netherlandish, but continued to ascend to new heights. With what astonishing fineness are the movements of these riders observed! How clearly the different planes are separated, and with what botanical exactness the leaves and the oranges are drawn! With what pains he endeavours, with a Japanese sharpness of eye, to render all the branches and leaves in correct perspective! In reading his biography and studying his works one cannot but feel reverence for this zealot who prosecuted his study of perspective in leaves and branches with as much reverence as though it had been a holy service to God.

His equestrian portrait of the *condottiere* John

Hawkwood, in the cathedral of Florence, is also of epoch-making importance. The spirit of the Renaissance and the equestrian statue—these involve almost the same idea. Equestrian statues must again, as in classical antiquity, be erected in public places; but plastic art was not yet capable of solving these problems and painted statues had to suffice. In Uccello's fresco everything has a characteristic and monumental air. Donatello learned from him, when seventeen years later he created the statue of Gattamelata, and even Titian's Charles V. presupposes Uccello's Hawkwood.

The second problem was to furnish the new age with a new soul and a new body. In the middle ages men regarded themselves as a flock following the Good Shepherd, and art consequently did not recognise the individual and the particular. In the structure and position of the figures, as in their expression, a general and uniform type of beauty prevailed, which in the previous pages we have had ample occasion to examine. The fifteenth century, on the other hand, marks the victory of individualism and the uncompromising prominence of the individual. An abundance of sharply outlined characters suddenly appears—robust, clear-cut personalities; lawless natures belonging just as much in the gallery of criminals as in that of great men. Character, individuality, power, and energy are the passwords of the age. This new humanity, all these rugged and manly figures which the age had

created, had also to appear in painting. In contrast to the former preference for beauty of an angelic and tender type, the problem now was to depict energetic and powerful beings; and to replace the shy and feminine, though bearded, men in the pictures of the older masters by angular, harsh, determined, and daring types. The figures which had formerly hovered like spirits above the earth had now to stand firmly upon their own feet and become a part of their earthly home.

But the sentimental as well as the external ideals of mankind had changed. Instead of humility and self-effacement shining from downcast eyes and transfigured features, rugged faces with furrowed brows appear. The whole menagerie of passions was let loose. As the tyrants of the *quattrocento* unreservedly followed the passion of the moment, whether it were sensuality or towering rage, art was now commanded to represent more powerful emotions than earlier painting had known; to depict flitting motion, changing gesture, and passion convulsively thrilling the human frame.

Such problems were not even approached by Jan van Eyck and Pisanello. Although they had indeed painted the new costumes of their day, yet in their dainty manner of representation they remained Gothic. Their works have nothing of the rough breadth of the new age and its free demeanour, nothing of the depths of soul which suddenly appeared with such elementary power. Donatello was the first to give sculpture its new ideal; and it is characteristic how one extreme

followed the other. The standard of beauty was measured by the rudimentary and uncompromising representation of individual qualities. For thus may be best explained all the strange physiognomies which suddenly made their appearance in art: coarse men of the people with uncouth, overworked figures; peasants, with bones of bronze and pointed weather-beaten features; half-starved old beggars with flabby muscles and tottering bodies; neglected fellows with bald heads, stubbly beards, and long muscular arms. In place of the former dainty pose, every line is now a sinew. Their firm, energetic attitude reflects the entire spirit of the rugged age of the *condottieri;* especially when, under the power of passion, the whole body is shaken as by convulsions. In his endeavour to render drastic expression Donatello occasionally descends to grimaces, and it is no accident that he so loves the figures of Magdalen and John the Baptist. For in these figures all is united that the time demanded: a body upon which hunger and self-denial have left their hideous mark; a withered skeleton, held together by the leathery skin alone, and convulsed by tearful woe and fiery, ecstatic pathos.

The Donatello of painting is Andrea del Castagno, a keen and fearless spirit, who hesitates at no brutality or exaggeration which lends character to his figures. Like Donatello he loves revolting physiognomies, wild men of the desert, and starving ascetics, whose mighty and powerful features, consumed by an awfully intensi-

fied life, nevertheless create an indelible impression. Like Donatello, he combines with keenness of facial expression mighty statuesque power. His *Crucifixion* in Santa Maria Novella is a marvel of pathetic expression; particularly the figure of Mary, a harsh and embittered matron, whose entire body is bowed in suffering. In his *Last Supper* in Sant' Apollonia every figure has a character of rigid severity—that concentrated fulness of life expressed in Donatello's statues of the Campanile. One lingers before his *Pietà* in Berlin because of its grandiose, heroic ugliness. His *Magdalen* and the two *Johns* in Santa Croce find their equal only in the ascetic figures of the great contemporary sculptor.

By dint of sheer realism he sometimes attains a mighty, kingly style. His equestrian portrait of Niccolo da Tolentino, the pendant of Uccello's Hawkwood in the cathedral, is of a defiant and monumental grandeur, and the portraits of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio, as well as those of Acciajuolo, Uberti, and Pippo Spano, all of which he painted for Villa Pandolfini, are most impressive in their mighty, heroic power. Pippo Spano especially, standing, his sword in hand, with legs spread apart, seems the spirit incarnate of the *quattrocento*—that elemental age, equally great in art and in passion. *Terribile*—that much misused word—is certainly appropriate for Castagno. He is the king of the lawless age which piled up the unhewn stones of the Pitti Palace.

The third subject requiring study was the problem of colour. Accustomed to fresco painting artists had devoted little attention to the technique of panels, and were therefore far from having achieved the luminous colouring of the Flemish pictures that had found their way to Italy. To fill this deficiency was the lot of an artist who came from the city in which the greatest triumphs of colour in later Italian art were celebrated—from Venice. Domenico Veneziano, who had seen Pisanello's frescoes arise in the Ducal Palace, had then followed him to Rome, and had finally settled in Florence, is reputed to have been the first man who experimented with colours, independent of the Netherlanders.[1] Although his panels are painted in tempera they are characterised by a peculiar brilliancy and shimmer and a soft enamel-like effect. We are confronted by the interesting fact that a Venetian, who had evidently acquired the colour sense at home, attempted, as early as the first half of the fifteenth century, and in severe, plastic Florence, to solve the same problems which did not again occupy Venetian painters until the days of Bellini.

Even in sentiment the Venetian is recognisable.

[1] In common with other German writers, Professor Muther uses the terms Netherlands and Netherlanders for the Low Countries and their inhabitants during this epoch. Their art is more properly termed Netherlandish than Flemish, since it was common to both the Dutch and the Flemish provinces. Not until the sixteenth century did it differentiate in consequence of their separation, and we may then more properly speak of Flemish and Dutch art than during the earlier period. —Ed.

The harsh, realistic traits which obtrude in Domenico's altar-pieces should not mislead us into considering him an unbridled naturalist in the sense Castagno was. The relation between these two artists was one of mutual giving and taking. The impressions which Castagno received from Domenico are expressed in his occasional experiments with colour in such paintings as the *Crucifixion;* it is even related that he killed Domenico on account of envy at his success as a colourist. Domenico, on the other hand, assumed the garb of Castagno when he painted *Sts. John and Francis* in Santa Croce. As a matter of fact this rugged rusticity was little in accordance with his nature. He was the first after Pisanello to paint portraits—those profile heads in which the evolution of the portrait from the medal can be so clearly followed. His subjects are all young girls. In his portrait of the little Bardi maiden (Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, Milan), he has depicted with loving tenderness the charming lines of the arch profile and dainty neck, the eye with free, childish glance and the blond hair adorned with pearls. At a time when other portrait painters were only in their element when giving the facsimilies of old wrinkled faces and characteristic ugliness, he could thus render the budlike freshness of maidenhood with finely felt grace. The same young woman, only a few years later, may be seen in a profile portrait of the Berlin Gallery: in the one instance a shy fiancée fresh from school, in the other a more

developed young wife. As several other portraits of young women ascribed in the different galleries to other artists are probably the work of Domenico, he may be characterised as feminine in the midst of virile Florentine art, and so the first artist who realised the grace of youth and the charm of tender womanhood. Thus did Venice, whose later art developed into a hymn to womanhood, produce even at the beginning of the fifteenth century the first portraitist of girls.

Such active minds wrestling with great problems were of course not in a position to supply the entire artistic needs of their day. The *èclaireurs*, therefore, were accompanied by the *profiteurs*, the investigators by those who popularised their ideas. The former did not dissipate their efforts or attempt activity in different fields, but laid down the results of their investigation in a few works every one of which meant a conquest. The latter attempted to achieve breadth instead of depth. With the aid of the technical instruments which others had forged, they set out to conquer the world. The whole fulness of life entered into art; and the history of the civilisation of the age is recorded in its paintings.

Fra Filippo, especially, and Gozzoli became the chroniclers of their epoch: careless, versatile minds, who, without troubling themselves over scientific problems, plunged with a joyous quiver in the stream of worldly events. By their position in life and education, both had been called to hold aloft the banner of

the old religious painting; for one was a friar, the other the favourite pupil of the blessed brother of San Marco. But how little religious feeling remains in their works!

Even as an individual, Fra Filippo is an interesting type of the day. Although only eight years younger than Fiesole, he was as different from him as a gallant *abbé* from a saintly hermit. In his quiet cloister Fra Giovanni knew nothing of the temptations of life or of the love of woman; but Filippo was of "such a loving nature that he would have given all his possessions for women." In order to seek an adventure he would leave his workshop and work for days. When confined in his convent he made a rope out of the bedclothes in order to escape through the window upon a nightly expedition.[1] He eloped with Łucrezia Buti, a pretty nun of Prato, and Spinetta, her younger sister, also fled to the home of the jolly couple. When Cosmo de' Medici heard of these scrapes, he only "laughed heartily over them."

These performances, although indifferent as anecdotes, illumine the joyful and worldly character of the age, and explain why the pictures of Fra Filippo have so little in common with Fiesole's. Only in several of his youthful works, as in the delicate *Adoration of the Christ-child*, in Berlin, is there a breath of that heavenly love which Fra Angelico painted. The sub-

[1] According to Vasari, in the story which Browning followed in his famous poem, and from which the author's version is derived, Filippo was confined in the house of Cosimo de' Medici, who thus sought to keep the roving friar out of mischief.—Ed.

ject of the painting, its light, rosy colour and the soft flow of the draperies, betray a connection with the older art. He even became a fresh narrator, gazing with sensual glance into life, and portraying in his paintings sprightly maidens and women with nothing holy about them. His *Coronation of the Virgin* rivals the beauty of a harem, in the charming maidens who are kneeling, their hair crowned with rose wreathes, and carrying flowering, long-stemmed lilies in their hands. In his paintings of Madonnas everything solemn and representative is eliminated. The lowly Virgin has become a blooming Florentine woman who devotes much attention to the toilette. He clothes her with gold-seamed garments, drapes her with scarfs and jewellery, and arranges her lace collar with the choice taste of a man who is an authority upon such things. Of course, with the principal figure the surroundings also change. Mary is no longer enthroned or surrounded by saints, but sits in her home or in a garden. Even in his frescoes at Prato depicting the life of the Baptist and of St. Stephen, he remains an admirer of women. In this cycle he occasionally attempts a serious, solemn style; but he certainly took most pleasure in the picture which represented *Herod's Banquet* with Salome dancing. A *Dinner with the Medici* would have been a more suitable title. "Fra Filippo was very partial to men of cheerful character, and lived for his own part in a very joyous fashion": thus Vasari characterised him, and the artist certainly

CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN

Accademia, Florence

resembled the man. It would be vain to seek depth or grandeur in his works. As the son of a butcher, he passed his life among rather elementary feelings; but his wholesomeness and good nature, his harmless epicureanism, and fine feeling for feminine beauty make him a true son of this joyful and happy age.

Benozzo Gozzoli experienced a similar artistic development. When in his youth he painted the delightful woodland story of the *Journey of the Three Kings* in the Palazzo Medici, he was still the dainty pupil of Angelico, and although he had fallen in love with the springtime, he had not yet forgotten heaven. He does not merely relate a novel of Florentine life; for groups of angels of captivating beauty terminate, on either side, this fresh and lovable work. Afterwards this dreamy tendency disappears. The lyric poet no longer survives and the narrator alone speaks in the celebrated cycles of San Gimignano and Pisa, which under biblical titles illustrate the whole life of the *quattrocento.* In the former cycle, which represents the *Life of St. Augustine,* one picture is particularly celebrated, because it gives information in regard to instruction in the schools of the fifteenth century. In the Pisan cycle, which treats subjects from the Old Testament, there is a veritable history of Florentine manners; the *Legend of Noah* is transformed into a Florentine vintage and the *Building of the Tower of Babel* affords an opportunity to depict the confused action of a building site, in which Cosmo de' Medici, accom-

panied by his friends, views the structure. There is nothing of the thunder of the prophets or of the bloody wrath of Jehovah; but he relates contemporary wars, the foundation of cities, and the pleasures of country life. He knows as little of artistic subtleties or of modern problems as the Giotteschi who laboured in the Camposanto before him. But his bubbling narrative talent and facility of execution are most astonishing. Minarets, obelisks, triumphal columns, palaces, gardens and vineyards, people of every age and condition, animals and flowers—all these he weaves into bright garlands. To improve and convert is as far from his purpose as possible; his only aim is to entertain, chat superficially, and record the chronicles of his age.

III. Piero della Francesca

As the activity of the Florentine masters had not been confined to their native city, but had spread throughout Tuscany, it was not long before the spirit of realism took root elsewhere. Prato, the coquettish little city in the plain of the Arno, Empoli, and Pistoja, summoned Florentine masters; in Pisa the time-honoured cradle of mediæval painting, the new works of Gozzoli arose; in San Gimignano, in the picturesque mountain town of Arezzo, in Borgo San Sepolcro, and Cortona—everywhere Florentine painters were active.

By this means realistic art was carried into these distant provinces. There, too, the painters were no

longer willing to listen to the melodies of centuries gone by, as Gentile had done. Forgetting the ancient churchly ideals, they contended with their Florentine associates in the difficult labour of investigation. The dreamers who had lived so completely apart from the world were followed by calm and clear observers. Indeed, the artist with whom the realistic movement in Umbria began, Piero della Francesca, is the greatest of those searching minds whose scientific experiments created the grammar of modern painting, and who attempted problems which have occupied the world even until our own day.

Scarcely twenty years have passed since Impressionism entered the artistic activity of the present day. The problem was to represent objects in their atmospheric veil, enveloped by light and air; it was not to paint local colours, but the effects of light under which every object momentarily changes colour. The activity of Piero della Francesca confirms the old saying of Ben Akiba.[1] Four hundred years ago he proposed the problem of realism, and endeavoured as the forerunner of the most modern artists to establish in what manner atmosphere changes colour impressions.

The conditions then were very much the same as in our own day. The consciousness had gradually arisen that there was a contradiction between the sharp out-

[1] A rabbi in Gutzkow's *Uriel Acosta*, whose favourite expression was, "Alles schon dagewesen"—there is nothing new under the sun. —Ed.

lines and bright glistening colours of the van Eycks and Pisanello and what the eye actually sees; for objects do not glisten in nature as Jan painted them on the Ghent altar. Yet another problem arose. Earlier artists, whose eyes lingered upon details, were not capable of rendering wide and distant views. Their perspective knowledge only permitted them to indicate the recession of planes by means of hills and curtains. As they were not able to paint the broad heaven which lies above the plane, they avoided attempting it. The landscape rises almost vertically to two thirds of the height of the picture, and often indeed the ascending surface is given without attempting to render the sky. The picture is the representation of a flat surface, and does not create the impression of depth.

By reason of his origin, Piero was called to offer a successful solution of these problems. The little town of Borgo San Sepolcro, where, in 1420, he was born, lies in the midst of the Umbrian plain. While artists who laboured in densely populated and closely built cities were accustomed, with sharp eye, to observe things from near by, Piero, standing on the hill of his native town, saw only light and space. He saw the sun as it brooded over the valley and bathed objects, now in the splendour of the morning, now in the quivering light of noon, now in the soft twilight. Narrowed by no limit, his eye swept over numberless hills into infinite space. The two problems of space and light, therefore, became the great objects of his life.

The Florentines had also approached both. Uccello endeavoured by lines in perspective to awaken the feeling of depth; Castagno was fond of placing his figures in a niche in order to attain the impression of a plastic object in space, and Domenico Veneziano attempted to interpret the gleaming shimmer of objects. When Piero, in 1438, came to Florence with Domenico, after the latter's employment in Perugia, he saw the works of all these masters. What he had felt in his home became the object of scientific research. An Umbrian gathered the threads together in his hand, and solved the problem which the Florentines had laboriously attempted. The country in which St. Francis had written his hymn to the sun bestowed upon the world the first painter of light.

Even in his earliest work, the altar of the Misericordia, which is still preserved in the hospital of Borgo, both problems are announced. The style is as new as the subject is mediæval. While earlier artists had laboured rather in the style of relief and upon flat surfaces, Piero, in order to create the impression of spacious depth, represents the mantle of the Madonna as a hollow, cubic space, in which the kneeling figures are arranged in circular form. In contrast with earlier paintings, which reveal only broken local colours, the inner side of the mantle which Mary spreads over the believers refracts and reflects the colour in accordance with the light that sweeps over it. In his next picture, the fresco in San Francesco at Rimini, representing the

lord of the city, Sigismondo Malatesta, a celebrated *condottiere*, kneeling before his patron saint, Piero has transferred these principles to landscape; the wall is broken open and the Duke is seen kneeling in an open space, which, pervaded by delicate light, stretches into the infinite. In order to heighten the impression of infinite space, he has erected in the foreground, like a mighty screen, a Renaissance column; that is to say, in order to direct the eye into the depth, he used the same artifice afterwards employed by Claude Lorrain. The two portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino are also significant of these tendencies. While Pisanello and Domenico Veneziano had preserved, in their portraits, the severe style of ancient medals, Piero, in his tendency to attain the impression of depth, broke with this point of view. A wide landscape with well tilled acres, hills and valleys, representing the blessings of good government, stretches out. The blue background is no longer that of a medal, but the sky stretching brightly over the fields. Instead of painted reliefs the figures have the effect of bodies in space. It is true that he did not solve the problem perfectly. His insistence upon the rigid profile causes a dissonance between the spacious effect of the background and the flat, constrained style of the heads. But he has made the beginning for the substitution of really painted portraits in place of painted medals.

While in these works he competes successfully with his Florentine colleagues, in a series of others he has

taken over the ancient inheritance of the Umbrians, the sense for feminine charm, into the new period. For there hardly exists a more tender picture than his Madonna, in Oxford, who, pale and emaciated, with irregular but distinguished features, bends so silently to the Christ-child. In his *Birth of Christ*, in London, the scientific problem is, as usual, most prominent. In order to attain the impression of spacious depth he causes the roof of the hut to descend in keen foreshortening, so that one feels that the figures really stand in space; and on both sides he directs the view to the landscape which, just because the scene in the foreground is pushed forward, seems the more distant and infinite in effect. In like manner he proposes a fixed problem of light, the interpretation of the silvery gleam of moonlight. Pale, blue light fills the room, quivers in greyish beams through the hut, and bathes the landscape of the background a bluish mist. But the eye lingers with rapture upon the beautiful angels who have come down from heaven to greet the Madonna with song and with the music of mandolin and viol. They are very wonderful and of a captivating modern beauty, reminding one of Rossetti—these budding maidens in gay costumes like those of an operetta, with their wavy locks and gleaming necklaces.

The frescoes of the *History of the Holy Cross*, upon which he was engaged in the Church of San Francesco in Arezzo until 1466, show him at the height of his ability. All the problems which he had adopted from the

Florentines are here solved in classic perfection. While Uccello's battle-pieces do not progress beyond automatic stiffness, Piero's pictures are perfected results of modern battle painting. Castagno had laboured to acquire the third dimension, but with Piero the surface that he had to paint resolves itself without effort into space. Although Domenico Veneziano was the first to render the effects of light, Piero transformed all nature into a world of values which were determined by the all-ruling factor of light. In his *Adam and Eve* Masaccio was the first to approach the problem of the nude; but Piero renders scenes—especially nude men seen from behind—which seem to have been taken from the works of Klinger.

The psychological aspect of his work is no less remarkable than the technical. In representing the *History of the Holy Cross*, he actually gives the history of the Tree of Life which Seth, the son of Adam, planted: the history of the tree trunk, the wood of which served as a bridge, then as the threshold of the Temple, which once lay at the bottom of the sea, then in the depths of the earth; and which, although the Nazarene was crucified upon it, still preserves its indestructible power. The introductory picture, in which the dying Adam gives the command to plant the tree, contains the master's philosophy. He sits there, aged and tired; the power of primitive man has left his sickly limbs. Beside him stands Eve supported by a crutch, her face wrinkled and her breasts withered.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST
National Gallery, London

This group, however, is balanced on the other side by a powerful young man, strong as an athlete, and beside him a buxom lass whose full breasts protrude from her clothing. It is the contrast of age and youth, of decline and power, of death and of ever renewing procreation referred to by the Earth Spirit in Goethe's *Faust*—

"Geburt und Grab,
Ein ewiges Meer,
Ein wechselnd Weben,
Ein glühend Leben."

Piero resembles the Earth Spirit. What Millet called "le cri de la terre" resounds through his works. He knows no heaven, but only the fruitful all-supporting earth. The grain ripens, the soil of fertile acres steams, and waving fields of grain stretch before us. Man, bound fast to the soil and hard pressed, leads upon this earth a great animal life. For Piero the world is no longer a station on the road to heaven. He is the son of the soil, made of the earth, to which he will again return. He loves the workman, leaning on his spade; the tiller of the soil, who makes it tributary and fruitful. He is also attracted by Nubian types, because these primitive men have something earthly and vegetating about them. His women resemble nurses who only live to give life to new generations. In contrast to the figures of Gentile gazing longingly towards heaven, an Umbrian peasant now proclaims a new gospel: that there is no immortality after death, but only the withering and the budding, the eternal process of creation in nature, is immortal.

The *Madonna del Parto*, which after the completion of the frescoes of Arezzo he painted for the mortuary chapel of the mountain town Ville Monterchi, is perhaps his most representative work. Angels draw back a curtain, revealing a woman placing, with monumental gesture, her hand on her consecrated body. Here he has painted the symbol of life; for the Madonna is not the Blessed Virgin, but Cybele, the primeval mother of the race of man, the incarnation of Zola's *La Terre*. Nor is there any death or resurrection of existence for him. As in the frescoes at Arezzo he had avoided representing the Crucifixion, although the theme demanded it, so at San Sepolcro he paints not the crucified but the risen Christ. Motionless as if a part of the soil, the sleeping guards lie before the sarcophagus, and with solemn dignity the Earth Spirit, superhumanly powerful, rises from the dark shaft. Some of the trees are dead and bare; but on others a new and succulent green begins to sprout.

His later works are only further paradigms of his principles. A flaring daylight lies over the *Baptism of Christ*, in the National Gallery (London). The body of Christ is not flesh-coloured, but the light falling through the treetops plays upon the skin with greenish reflections. The figures do not stand in front of the landscape, but grow out of it mighty as statues. The trees meeting above the scene are pomegranates, the symbol of fertility. As angels, the fresh, saucy maidens of the *Birth of Christ*, with green wreaths and red and

white roses in their fair hair, have returned. In the picture of the Brera in which Federigo of Urbino kneels before the Madonna, he has painted the latter's wife, Battista Sforza, as the Madonna, and her son, the little Guidobaldo, as the Christ-child; the view opens into the apse of the church in which the figures are arranged cubically in a hollow space. In the *Madonna di Sinigaglia* he attempts the favourite problem of Pieter de Hoog in showing how the light from a window, flooding into a room, vibrates more dimly in one place and more brightly in another. The love of still-life revealed in this painting led him to paint pictures without figures, representing wide squares enlivened by festive Renaissance buildings; and thus architectural painting took its place in Italian art. It is true that in these last works a yellowish-green mist has taken the place of the clear, bright colours he had formerly loved. It announced his disease of the eye—a strange irony of fate that just the man who had seen so much light was finally blinded.

IV. The Harbingers of the Storm.

All these pictures seem separated by many decades from those of Gentile and Fiesole. Every vestige of the mediæval feeling has died away, and all traces of religious devotion have been eliminated. Some treat subjects only to solve technical problems. With what a mocking shrug of the shoulders they must have looked upon Fiesole, seeing in his piety

nothing but a melodramatic concession to the public. Others, while they did not change painting into science, nevertheless translated the whole Bible into a worldly language, using all scriptural subjects as a pretext for pictures of manners and fashions. That painting should be a handmaiden of religion and satisfy certain psychic needs seemed to them an exploded theory.

It is a question whether this art could have remained permanently dominant. However worldly-minded the upper classes may have been, and however proudly painters may have followed the programme of art for art's sake, there was also a people who demanded other nourishment from art, who wished to be moved, and sought edification and comfort in pictures. Thus it came to pass that about the middle of the century a popular art appeared, in direct opposition to worldly and scientific painting. Among the people themselves, suppressed and grudging, a religious reaction was preparing. Although Roger van der Weyden and Fiesole are separated by only a few years, one was the end, the other the beginning of an epoch. The art of the former is no longer of the soft yet rather thoughtless and phlegmatic piety of the middle age, but the thunder preceding the storm; an earthquake that convulsed the nations.

This is not true of all the master's paintings, for at the end of his life he became even soft and conciliatory. In his last works, the Middelburg altar-piece and *St. Luke*, he is almost reconciled in character and in

execution with the school of van Eyck, gentle and quiet in feeling, delicate and detailed in landscape. If another work ascribed to him in the Munich Gallery, the altar-piece of the *Three Kings*, is really by him and not by Memling, it might be said that in his latest period he achieved an almost courtly delicacy of execution. The costumes are smart and elegant, the movements pleasing and courteous. The bit of landscape in the background—showing Memling's rider on a white horse approaching by a lonely road—would even stamp him as the first painter of *paysage intime* in the Netherlands.

But it is not of such elegant works that we think when Roger's name is mentioned. One recalls great, wide-open eyes, tears streaming down emaciated cheeks, hands convulsively clasped or with stiff fingers stretched to heaven; one thinks of wailing and of wild anguish.

Jan van Eyck was not concerned with the suffering and heavy-laden; he appealed only to the wealthier classes, who demanded of art a feast for the eye but no psychic emotion. With him everything is gay and bright; the flowers bloom, clothes glimmer, and a joyous Easter feeling pervades the world.

When Roger, the city painter of Brussels, spoke to the people, he spoke in words of thunder, like an impassioned prophet of the Old Testament. His only theme is the suffering of the Saviour. Emaciated people with staring, tear-stained eyes stand sobbing

and wailing about the cross; Mary sinks unconscious to the earth, and the apostles cry to heaven in wildest despair. Or he paints the Madonna seated, a grief-stricken matron, as if petrified by pain, and holding in her lap the wounded and emaciated corpse of her Son. In another painting the heaven has opened and Christ calls the blessed to him, consigning the damned to eternal tortures. In so far as he does not revert to the mediæval gold background, he even draws the landscape into the struggle of passion. Abrupt and jagged cliffs arise from dismal chasms, and all nature seems petrified when the rigid body of the Redeemer is interred.

As we of the present are no longer familiar with such passions, much about Roger's pictures seems forced and the outbursts of pain impress us as grimaces. But if we reflect with what theatrical hollowness later artists painted the same theme, we cannot but feel the elemental force and the primeval power of these works. It seems as if no single man, but the people itself, had created them. As in Roman times it had once demanded *panem et circenses*, it now cried for religion, not begging but threatening and prepared for a revolt. Roger was the interpreter of this sentiment of the age. Never before and seldom since then has painting spoken in such tragic, convulsing tones. This explains the tremendous effects of his work, which may be likened to an avalanche rolling over the countries.

BEWAILING OF THE BODY OF CHRIST
Berlin Gallery

For Roger's influence was not confined to the north. The journey which as a pious man he made in order to celebrate the jubilee of 1450 in the Eternal City, was also an event for Italian art. From Cosmo de' Medici he received a commission for that altar-piece with the Medicean patron saints, which now hangs in Frankfort. This shows that in Italy also there existed religious needs for which the scientific and worldly painting was not sufficient. It would be interesting to know what external event caused this sudden flaming up of the religious spirit. Did St. Anthony of Padua, who was at that time preaching, bring about the revolution? It is very remarkable that the aged Donatello, who had become a classicist while at Rome, suddenly changed into a wild and impassioned Baroque master. A shrill cry of despair seems to echo through his works at Padua, and it is noteworthy that the school of that city assumed the same tone.

For all such pictures as Gregorio Schiavone and Marco Zoppo painted have nothing in common with the superficial worldliness of Fra Filippo and Gozzoli, but are products of the same spirit which dominates Donatello's reliefs and Roger's *Pietà*. Earnest, unapproachable, and almost haughty, the Madonna sits on her marble throne, with saints of bony harshness and gloomy, threatening expression gathering about her. The world is dead; the eye sees no sprouting and budding, no flowers and perfume, but naked cliffs and gloomy caves. Bare and robbed of their foliage, the

trees, as if freezing, stretch their withered branches towards heaven. Men, too, were freezing; they longed again for the warming rays of the light of heaven. A harsh, frosty and ascetic spirit, as if of the north, pervades these works.

The same spirit is even more prevalent in the product of the school of Ferrara. The very soil of this city is more northern than Italian. A flat plain, monotonous and dreary, stretches out like a mighty solemn Nirvana, filling the human spirit with religious stupor. The eye sees only little fields separated by crippled, leafless mulberry trees, among which scraggy grape-vines climb. Solemn and crude, defiant and gloomy, the Palazzo Schifanoja towers aloft, behind whose red brick walls the bloody tragedies recounted by Byron occurred. The streets are sober-looking and straight, and are flanked by palaces built of dark brick in the same severe and gloomy style.

It is easy to understand how Roger van der Weyden, on his road to Rome, found an appreciative reception in this serious northern town. Lionello d'Este, the friend of Pisanello, ordered from him that triptych of the *Descent from the Cross*, the central panel of which now hangs in the Uffizi. Indeed Roger's harsh, angular art had a determinative effect upon the character of Ferrarese painters. From Squarcione, in whose studio at Padua they received their education, they acquired technique, and from Piero della Francesca, who had been employed for some time at the

court of Lionello, they derived their preference for light grey values of colour and for wide extensive landscapes from which the figures arise like statues. Roger van der Weyden added an especially harsh note, that of Netherlandish ascetisicm.

The joint work of the school, the cycle of frescoes in the Palazzo Schifanoja, is characteristic of the mediæval spirit of Ferrarese art. The theme of the *Twelve Months* affords the opportunity of portraying, besides political events, the labour of the field and the pleasures of the hunt. The representation of *March* by women spinning in the midst of a landscape is especially important as the first picture of labour in the history of art. By the same artist, Francesco Cossa, is an *Autumn*, in the Berlin Gallery, which has made his name one of the best known of the *quattrocento:* a peasant woman in tucked-up dress, with spade and hoe in hand and a cluster of ripe grapes over her shoulder, stands in the midst of the field; a proud picture of labour, lonely as a mighty statue, with her eyes turned to her native village. The "scent of the earth," as we perceive it in the works of Piero della Francesca, seems to stream from this work. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Ferrarese still maintained more intimate relations with the middle age than their contemporaries. While the Florentines narrate in a worldly manner, the Ferrarese reach back to mediæval allegory. For *Autumn* is one of those "pictures of the months" which occur in mediæval

calendars, and the entire Schifanoja frescoes treat the mediæval theme, that the course of the stars determines the fate of men.

Besides these allegories practically the only other works in Ferrarese painting are such as treat with ascetic severity and almost grimacing pathos the theme of the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ* or the *Madonna Enthroned*. Thin, ugly, aged figures, bony old men and careworn matrons, dominate almost exclusively the repertoire of Ferrarese art. No other Italian school stands as near to the naturalism of Roger; no other took such delight in harsh and disagreeable lines, callous hands and emaciated bodies quaking as if from the fever. But it is just to this one-sidedness that its works owe their mighty and characteristic greatness. The colour, the harsh juxtaposition of lemon yellow, blue, and vermilion, even heightens the harsh and solemn effect.

In its wild barbaric pathos, the *Pietà* of Cosimo Tura in the Louvre has a grandiose effect, and his Madonna in Berlin glitters like Byzantine mosaic. Her throne, adorned with gilded bronze reliefs and glittering mosaics, rests upon columns of crystal, and her garments gleam in emerald, scarlet, and yellow; while the stiff, ascetic, and bony saints have the effect of mighty statues. Even Ercole dei Roberti, although belonging to the younger generation, has the same rugged and archaic style. In describing his passion scenes in San Petronio at Bologna, Vasari could speak

only of Mary sinking into unconsciousness and of weeping faces, disfigured by pain. His best known work in Germany is the *John the Baptist* in the Berlin Gallery—a skeleton arising like a statue from a reddish, solemn landscape. In the presence of such paintings one feels the announcement of a spiritual tendency to which the future would belong, and sees, approaching at a distance, the man who was called to be the Luther of Italy. But the time was not yet ripe; for another power, the antique, was as yet stronger than Christianity.

V. Mantegna

Up to this time the antique had exercised but little influence upon the artistic activity of the *quattrocento*. The word "Renaissance" in the sense of a revival of antiquity would be more suitable for the *trecento*. At the time when Petrarca, the youthful enthusiast, set out to make known the buried treasures of the pagan world; when Cola di Rienzi dreamed of restoring the greatness of ancient Rome, and when Boccaccio wrote his *Genealogia Deorum* and those lightly-clad novels in which a thoroughly heathen spirit dallies and jests—at that time art also experienced an antique Renaissance. It was the age of the baptistery and the church of San Miniato in Florence, of the cathedral, the baptistery, and the leaning tower in Pisa—all works of the Romanesque style, after antique models and of an almost Hellenic purity. In

close imitation of the antique the Pisani carved their sculptures, and in the domain of painting Giotto filled the antique forms with new life and animated their serious outlines with Christian content. At hardly any other time was Christian art so permeated by antique elements as when the master of the *Triumph of Death* painted his nude *putti* at Pisa, and Lorenzetti created those frescoes in which many a figure seems to have been taken directly from Pompeian mural paintings.

In contrast to this the antique plays a more modest part in the earlier art of the *quattrocento*. The advice given by Leonbattista Alberti to the artist, to substitute for antique forms an independent study of natural ones, clearly indicates the change. The only thing adopted from the *trecento* was the delight taken in antique accessories. As in Giotto's pictures the column of Trajan, the temple of Minerva at Assisi, the horses of St. Mark's, and Victories bearing palms occur, so now paintings fairly abound in antique buildings and ornaments. Even before architecture had taken the new path, painters used architectural backgrounds of an antique character and scattered a profusion of palmettes and rosettes, sphinxes and satyrs, cornucopias and meanders, garlands and triglyphs, candelabra and urns, sirens and trophies to attain a pleasing surface decoration. Antique statuettes, here a Cupid, there a Venus, are placed in niches; masks, antique busts and medallions of the emperors are introduced wherever the

space permits. Artists take as much pleasure in antique detail as a child with a new toy, and play with it wherever possible. Yet they never progress beyond this dallying appropriation of classic ornament. Nothing is more distant from the simplicity of antique line than a statue by Donatello, with its sharply accentuated head, long limbs, capriciously ordered draperies; nothing is less like the classic style of antique reliefs than Ghiberti's Baptistery doors, with their introduction of pictorial perspective. Even less do we find antique echoes in the types, costumes, position or arrangement of paintings of Uccello and Castagno, Fra Filippo and Gozzoli.

Not until the second half of the fourteenth century does the antique begin to exercise a stylistic influence. This influence first appears in Padua, which was the city of Livy as well as of St. Anthony. When in 1413 the supposed grave of the great Roman historian was discovered, every one, even the most humble, considered himself a man of the antique world. Wherever Paduans went, they were enthusiastic collectors. Cardinal Scarampi, especially, is a type of the age; a prince of the church who took greatest pride in the fact that the arena of Padua belonged to him; an enthusiast for the antique, who had Roman aqueducts built, and in connection with Cyriacus of Ancona gathered a much envied collection of Greek gems. His counterpart in the domain of painting was Francesco Squarcione, who, in order to see the celebrated works of antique art,

travelled even in Greece; made plaster casts, collected busts, statues, reliefs, and fragments of architecture; and after his return to Padua opened an academy of painting on the basis of this collection.

It is true that Squarcione's own works show little influence of the antique, and it would be erroneous to characterise Andrea Mantegna, his greatest pupil, as exclusively a partisan of the antique. Mantegna, of all painters, can only be explained through his own personality. Piero della Francesca and he signify respectively the soil and the rugged cliffs in Italian art. With Giotto, Castagno, and Segantini, he was one of the four great shepherd boys in the history of art. A keen Alpine air pervades his works; they have the quality of granite, like the cliffs of the Euganean Mountains.

A glance at his portrait will reveal why the bust form was chosen for it. Although this was never done in painted likenesses of other artists of the *quattrocento* which survive, the master who created Mantegna's portrait had the feeling that only bronze would be suitable material for this stern head. What power, strength of purpose, and indomitable will appear in these features! This was evidently no mild and lovable man, but a strong and harsh character. As his relations to Squarcione, who adopted him as a poor boy, soon changed into enmity, so he maintained the same stiff-necked pride towards his later prince, Gonzaga of Mantua. In his letters every word is as

keen and biting as a sharp knife. As he was always in conflict with his prince, so neither could he live in peace with any neighbour, but accused and sued without mercy; every one who came in contact with him was wounded. Corresponding with these qualities in his pictures are the jagged halos and stiff tree-leaves, which also make the impression that one could scratch himself upon them so that the blood would flow. Of the same character is his entire art, which resembles a garden fenced closely about and full of steel traps. It sounds as sharp and as shrill as a brass shield struck by a sword. And it is precisely in this severity, from which everything mild, agreeable, and reconciling is eliminated, his one-sidedness and also his greatness lie. *Le style c'est l'homme.*

The man with the bronze head and the stony glance created people after his own image. How they stand there, pressed into their iron armour, like fabulous giants whose muscular backs and firm and sinewy legs seem formed by a sculptor rather than by a painter! Their whole bodies are tense, like an arrow on the string of a bow; just as Mantegna himself was always expecting opposition and ready for defence. They look sullen and silent, and the sharp folds that fall from the protruding cheekbones are hard and abrupt as if by a magic formula they had been petrified in motion. The draperies, even when they are of soft material, seem to be of steel; especially those stiff protruding little cloaks, which occur so frequently in his pictures.

In order to attain most pointed and stiff folds he was accustomed to model from rigidly sized paper and he would perhaps have preferred models of tin. This metallic style of drawing also reacts upon the colour. In conceiving appearances to be so rigid, he was naturally compelled to give the colour a metallic tone. Many of his figures, although they are painted after nature, resemble bronze statues, so hard are they in outline, and so much like polished bronze do the folds of the drapery glisten.

His manner of choosing the accessories is also determined by the same point of view. As he loves warriors in bronze armour with glittering arms and draperies with stony folds, he also heaps about them accessories of similar appearance; armour, helmets, tin vessels, gleaming metallic greaves, jagged halos and nails. The halo, which with other artists is an ethereal representation, Mantegna forms of heavy, glittering rings of pewter; and angels' heads, lightly indicated by others, look like floating pieces of Robbia-ware. Upon his picture of the *Resurrection* the edges of the halo behind the Saviour are jagged and as sharp as those of a razor. In his line engraving of the *Crucifixion* the inscription I. N. R. I. is fastened with thick iron nails, and in the foreground lies a heavy door of dry oak with a rusty iron frame. In other pictures urns and vases, copper vessels and gold chains are used to heighten the metallic effect.

Grandest of all, however, is his translation of land-

scape into the brazen style. For people like those he created could not live on the ordinary earth, but needed a world of the same rigid grandeur. In his pictures there are no meadows and gardens, no grass and flowers; but creation is transformed into a vision of the age of stone: bared of the covering earthly crust, and only enlivened by blocks of stone, dried trees, hedges, boulders, and sandy roads. Upon the hill-tops turret-crowned castles and high-walled cities tower. All vegetation is dead and the slaty summits of the cliffs are pushed into the foreground, opening into yawning chasms. Many of these scenes he must certainly have seen in nature. When he paints the *Deposition from the Cross* in a quarry of trachyte, chooses a cave of black lava for the scene of the *Adoration of the Kings*, and depicts on the left wing of this altar-piece a towering volcanic cliff, the basis of these paintings was probably studies made in the Euganean Mountains. But in other cases he uses the elements of nature for independent creations. As he loves to insert in the picture giant corals, such as no mineralogist has ever seen anywhere, so in the *Madonna della Petriera* he has enlarged a little stalactite formation into monumental proportions. In a quarry near by masons are occupied in hewing stone blocks; but even these are only introduced to strengthen the stony impression. The same purpose is served by his fondness for concentric paths ploughing through the hills. In introducing them he dis-

robes nature, as it were, and lays bare her stony skeleton.

He proceeds in the same manner with plants, being especially fond of grapes and leaves of vines. Just as wonderfully as they can be imitated to-day—the fruit in glass, and leaves in tin—so he painted them, equally true and equally hard. Greater changes were necessary in order to make trees harmonise with his style. They seemed to wear heavy iron armour, and their leaves, which no breeze could disturb, hang fast as steel from the branches. The branches stretch into the air, jagged and barbed as the points of javelins. Even the plants which grow in this stony soil have something metallic and crystalline about them. Some look like zinc sprinkled with white lead; others as if painted over with a coat of greenish bronze through which the white leaves of the steel still shimmer. He has translated even the air and the sky into this stony style. The soft, melting, and intangible qualities of clouds are rendered in hard, sharply outlined plastic forms. It is no accident that the painter who paid most attention to clear outline was the first to master the technique of line engraving, which is most adapted to rendering, free from their coloured veil, objects in relief, strength of contour, and solidity of form.

If we may at all speak of external influence in case of a mind like Mantegna's, it is probable that he received the determinative impression when Donatello was labouring in Padua. He probably witnessed the

creation of the equestrian statue of Gattamelata as well as the reliefs of the high altar, and may perhaps have entered into personal relations with Donatello. At all events the great Florentine found his most capable pupil not in a sculptor, but in this painter. Bronze statues were the first works of art upon which the glance of the lad fell; and it was this taste for them which caused him to attempt such plastic effects, as though sculpture were an accessory to painting. Next to Donatello, his principal teacher was Paolo Uccello, who had come to Padua in the train of the great sculptor and had painted in the Palazzo Vitaliani. To him Mantegna owed his inclination to devote himself to the science of perspective, which he enriched by revolutionary discoveries. That at an earlier period he was also familiar with the works of Piero della Francesca may be concluded from the resemblance of his picture of the *Resurrection*, at Tours, to Piero's fresco in San Sepolcro, from the *plein air* methods which pervade his representation of the *Legend of St. Christopher*, and, quite generally, from the problems of space which he attempted to solve.

Even in the celebrated pictures which he painted from 1454 to 1459 (between his twenty-third and his twenty-eighth year) in the church of the Eremitani at Padua, these elements all appear. As well in his manner of showing the figures from below, foreshortened in the way they would actually appear to the observer looking upward, as in the general space arrangements,

he endeavours to create the impression of depth. At a later period, when decorating the ceiling of the Camera degli Sposi in the Castello del Corte at Mantua, his perspective studies again led him to a new result. In transferring Uccello's principles to the decorating of the ceiling, he practically opened it, painting the *putti* as if they were actual beings suspended in space and seen from below; thereby becoming the inventor of perspective ceiling-decoration, and the ancestor of Correggio, Veronese, and Tiepolo.

In the portrait groups also, which he painted on the walls of this hall, two centuries join hands. Artists had at first confined themselves to introducing portraits of the donors into religious representations, and afterwards Castagno had created the first life-sized single portraits; but in these scenes from the lives of the Gonzagas the first independent portrait groups are represented. The path is for the first time trodden which led to Tintoretto, and from him to the Dutch *doelenstukken* of the seventeenth century.

But richest in consequence for the *quattrocento* was his relation to the antique. It is significant that the master who painted the portrait bust of Mantegna conceived him as a hero of antiquity, his long hair crowned with a laurel-wreath. For he towers in his epoch like the offshoot of a forgotten heroic age, like a Hellene born after his day. It seems as if Providence had only made use of Squarcione in order to produce Mantegna; for it was in his spirit that what Squarcione

had collected first won life and soul. In association with the humanists of Padua, he mastered the spirit of the antique, somewhat as Menzel mastered that of the age of Frederick the Great. With the zeal of an antiquarian, the scientific severity of an archæologist, he sought out even the smallest fragments that would serve to afford a living picture of the antique world; such as reliefs, coins, inscriptions, works of marble and bronze. He took pains to ascertain, even to the smallest detail, the armament of the ancients, and was not satisfied until he knew the appearance of a Roman bridle or sandal; and he was as familiar with their architectural forms as he was with their clothes, implements, and customs. In later life a sojourn in Rome afforded him a new opportunity to freshen his antique studies. Before this world of buildings and statues he stood amazed, and lingered, sketch-book in hand, before the column of Trajan and the arch of Titus.

Even the impression of his early Paduan frescoes, although they treated saintly legends, is one of solemn classicism. The strictly Hellenic character of these structures could only be obtained by a master who had grown up in a classic atmosphere; and the Roman equipments of the soldiers by a painter whose mind was a veritable encyclopædia of antiquity. When he painted the celebrated tablet in the Camera degli Sposi, telling in classical Latin and equally classic letters about the donor and the completion of the work, when he chained Sebastian not to a tree but to the ruin of a temple,

adding his name in Greek letters: such incidents only reveal how completely his spirit was dominated by the antique. Later, when Isabella d'Este mounted the throne of Mantua, the opportunity was afforded to create the work which he himself probably regarded as the climax of his artistic activity—the *Triumph of Cæsar*.[1] If formerly he could only use monuments of antiquity as accessories to religious paintings, he was now permitted to treat an actually antique theme. Making use of all the material he had collected for decades, he gave us the most learned reconstruction which antiquity has ever found; an evocation of the past to which following centuries could add nothing, either in the exactness of archæological detail or in the thoroughly antique conception of the subject.

But this is not the only novelty of his work, that to the Christian subjects which had heretofore dominated the répertoire of art the antique was now added. The occupation of artists with the antique introduced a number of new problems. To begin with, they were inspired by antique statues to discover more exactly than had been done before the laws of movement in the nude. For even though Piero della Francesca had previously taken a decisive step in portraying the nude, it was not in the nature of his art to depict motion. All of his pictures are in motionless repose, as if planted for eternity. They stride as heavily to and fro as the

[1] This celebrated series of nine cartoons on paper backed with canvas is now at Hampton Court, near London.

PARNASSUS

Louvre

peasant, who, walking through his field, sinks at every step in the loamy soil. Mantegna, whose beings lived not on the soil but in the mountains, supplemented Piero, in that he was the first to paint action as well as repose. He was the first to take up the movements of the nude body, with the resulting contractions and relaxation of the muscles, as an especial object of study. His line engraving of *Hercules Strangling Antæus*, especially, must have affected the artists of those days like a revelation.

No less evident is the influence of the antique in his treatment of costume. Whereas, heretofore, the *bizarrerie* of fashion had been an inexhaustible field of new discoveries for the painters, Mantegna altogether avoids contemporary costumes; substituting for the gaiety of costume and bric-a-brac, which former artists had loved, simple antique draperies, upon the artistic rendition of which he bestowed special attention. Something similar had been attempted by Piero della Francesca; but for Mantegna the search for beautiful motives of drapery is a determinative factor of the artistic activity. Not satisfied with arranging the draperies about the body with sovereign tact, he approached those problems of harmony and elegance which the sculptors of antiquity had so matchlessly solved. Even in one of his first works, *Sant' Eufemia* in the Brera, the play of the draperies is equal in beauty to the best draped statues of antiquity. His *Parnassus*, in the Louvre, painted for the private room

of Isabella d'Este, might be a work of Poussin in the severe antiquity of the rhythm of movement and the fall of the light draperies, here softly clinging to the body, there fluttering in the wind. Quite a new order of beauty, having nothing in common with the joyful realism and the indiscriminate copying of nature of the early *quattrocento*, makes its triumphal entry into art.

To recapitulate: Mantegna was the first to give his figures full plastic rotundity; to create the earliest perspective ceiling decorations and the earliest portrait groups, and to raise the study of the nude in motion and of draperies to a real artistic problem. He stands, therefore, revealed as the genius who, next to Piero della Francesca, exercised the most determinative influence upon the artistic activity of the younger generation.

VII. The Successors of Mantegna

Without Mantegna, Melozzo da Forli is unthinkable.[1] He lacks, however, the sturdy greatness of the Paduan; being as soft as the latter is hard, and as mild as he is austere and defiant. He was also influenced by his countryman Piero della Francesca, who imparted to him something of his delicate charm.

[1] It is, however, the prevailing opinion with art historians that the two painters working independently arrived at the same results. The same is probably true of Antonio Pollajuolo and the next artist treated, whose style was formed before Mantegna's brief stay in Florence.—Ed.

Even in his earliest works, the personifications of the liberal arts, which in 1474 he painted for the library of the Duke of Urbino, the manner in which he composed his figures in space reveals his relation to Piero. Instead of arranging the scenes in the manner of relief—the figure of each science to the left and her followers to the right—he places the throne in the middle of the background, with the masculine figures kneeling before it, and indicates the dimension of depth by means of the steps of the throne. In addition to this, he was principally occupied with draperies. With outspoken formal talent, he devoted to the cast of draperies an attention which would have delighted Fra Bartolommeo, the inventor of the lay figure.

In his next work, the painting of the cupola of the cathedral of Loreto, he first attempted Mantegna's problem of painting from below, but did not succeed in solving it, because he was lacking in a certain lightness; his figures are smothered in their heavy draperies. These difficulties were at last overcome in his cupola frescoes of Santi Apostoli at Rome. As Vasari relates, Christ was suspended so freely in the air that he seemed to burst the vaulting of the cupola, and the angels, too, appeared to move in the free space of heaven. As the cupola has been destroyed, it is impossible at the same time to say how far these perspective illusions were successful; but the fragments preserved in the sacristy of the Vatican are as remarkable for a delicate sense of beauty as for the mastery

of perspective. The angels with their fair fluttering locks, making music and singing while they are wafted about and a supernatural breeze stirs their garments, have not ceased to exercise their attraction for succeeding generations.

In this last work, the fresco of the Vatican Library representing Sixtus IV. appointing Platina its director, Mantegna and Piero della Francesca again clasp hands. With some resemblance to Mantegna's portraiture, he has created a portrait group of representative nobility. The disposition of the space noticeable in the keen foreshortening of the incrusted ceiling, the manner in which the columns recede, and in the view of the loggia opening in the background reminds one of Piero's *Santa Conversazione* at Milan, and at the same time points to the future; for Raphael had this picture in mind when he conceived the *School of Athens*.

In Florence, where in 1466 Mantegna had resided, he found a successor in Antonio Pollajuolo, the great bronze caster. Like Melozzo the latter was influenced by the mighty statuesque qualities of the Paduan and the classic repose of his draperies, especially when he created in the figures of the *Five Virtues* for the Mercatoria in Florence the counterpiece of the former's *Sciences* in the library of Urbino. But in another domain Mantegna was even more his master. Pollajuolo was first to acquire the technique of line engraving, and among his prints, one in especial, the *Battle of the Nudes*, is characteristic of his tendency. Never

had fiercely struggling figures, life and motion, been presented with such skill. All the muscular contractions and complicated motives of motion are rendered with a hitherto unknown mastery. This print is also significant of the tendency that ruled him as a painter. Following Mantegna he made anatomy a special field of study. "He understood the nude," relates Vasari, "better than any of his predecessors. As he studied anatomy on the dissecting table, he was the first to render the full play of muscles." From this point of view he chose his subjects, and by it alone his pictures should be criticised. Human bodies, contending in battle, contracted limbs in the most difficult contortions, the commingling and contest of struggling forces —such is his domain. His practise of bronze casting may also be recognised in his rendition of form, his preference for well rounded and undulating positions, and in the hard metallic character which characterises his style.

Of Christian subjects affording an opportunity for the solution of such problems he first chose Sebastian. The life-size painting in the Pitti Gallery reveals mighty forms which seem cast in bronze, with foreshortened head, swollen muscles and a loin-cloth formed like a bronze plate. In the London picture he has increased the problem by the introduction of archers: six men spanning crossbows and shooting at a nude figure. This gives an opportunity for varied positions and a rich play of muscles. Some of the executioners bending over to string their bows do it with such zeal that

one can see their veins swell; their sinews, hair, and the wrinkles of their faces are chiselled in bronze. For a similar reason he added to his répertoire the figures of Hercules, whose labours he depicted in a series of decorative paintings in the Palazzo di Venezia and the small double figures in the Uffizi: *Hercules Strangling Antæus and the Hydra.* How in the picture of Antæus the feet of Hercules are fastened to the earth; how the calves of his legs swell and his breast is thrown backward; and with what strangling power he clutches his antagonist—all this is another triumph in the representation of motion and of the nude. Even in the little panel of *Apollo and Daphne* in the National Gallery, the theme is chosen from this point of view. The elastic body of a youth and the austere body of a maiden, one following, the other fleeing—is this not a veritable compendium of difficult movements and anatomical studies? Along with human anatomy he was occupied with that of the horse, as witness the Munich sketch for an equestrian monument, which long passed for the work of Leonardo. We can understand how artists stood astonished before such works, for no Florentine before Pollajuolo had thus mastered the structure of the bodies of men and animals.

What with Pollajuolo was still experimental, Signorelli raised to quiet mastery. After Mantegna and Pollajuolo had fixed the laws of motion for the nude body, it was only left for Signorelli to go one step further and express the emotions of the soul by movements of

the body. He is, therefore, the connecting link between Mantegna and Michelangelo. The activity of Signorelli included everything. He painted altar-pieces for the cities of Tuscany and Umbria, and even in these he is reflected as a serious and virile master. Like Mantegna he knows no gentle lyricism; his pictures are crude and harsh, almost brusque and violent; he loves hard faces and profiles as sharp as a razor. But most of all he loved the nude, less the softness of the feminine body than the sinewy spareness of the masculine. Not because the legend tempted him, but only to glorify the splendour of the nude and sinewy human body, he painted the *Education of Pan.* In this painting, now in the Gallery of Berlin, all the movements of which the nude body is capable are represented; some of the figures are erect, others are seated, and still others recline. He is actuated by a similar point of view in the choice of his biblical subjects. The *Baptism of Christ* was a favourite, because it permitted him to represent in the figures of the candidates for baptism bodies in various positions. But he was fond of the *Crucifixion,* because the theme gave opportunity to depict a corpse with all possible contractions and contortions of the sinews. Of the saints who stand about the throne of Mary, Jerome was his favourite, because tradition permitted him to represent an aged body with wrinkled skin and overworked muscles. If such a figure is not possible in the foreground, he inserts it in the back-

ground, even though it may be in no wise related with the theme. It is like a monogram of Signorelli to find in all of his paintings, even in portraits, nude youths standing, sitting, or reclining. The rear view, showing powerful thighs and firm shoulder-blades, particularly tempts him. If there is no opportunity to depict such figures nude, he at least paints them clothed in tricot or tight-fitting armour. The angels are therefore his friends, especially Michael with his gleaming coat of mail, and lansquenets with stretched, steely sinews. It is especially these energetic, weather-browned figures, standing with legs spread apart, in a position which gives opportunity for all the muscles to play, and defiant as if they were courting danger, which gives his pictures a heroic, martial boldness. In his female figures and saints the drapery is simple and dignified without unnecessary bulging folds, everything being arranged in heavy masses and in great simple lines. To this powerful strength of line the colour quite corresponds. As in the case of Mantegna, it has a certain metallic sharpness, a tone of copper or bronze, not hard or dry but grey and gloomy. Although, as a pupil of Piero della Francesca, he is occupied in the *Education of Pan* with the study of reflex light, he is nevertheless too much of a draughstman and anatomist, too serious and harsh, to seek after charms of colour.

When he is not confined by the size of a panel painting, but stands in front of large mural surfaces, a great

dramatic talent rises within him. Among the paintings of the Sistine Chapel those of Signorelli immediately attract attention by their dramatic action and by a certain crude beauty. In his second cycle, the scenes from the *Life of St. Benedict*, painted in 1447 for the monastery of Monte Oliveto near Siena, the manner in which he has treated the theme is very characteristic. Passing over the youthful life of his hero, he begins abruptly with the picture which gives the opportunity to represent wild motion, the *Punishment of Florens*. In further sequence he selects scenes in which it is possible to portray lansquenets with martial equipment, especially soldiers on the march with halberds, feathered caps, and tightly fitting checkered uniforms.

When in his sixtieth year he was summoned to create his most celebrated work, the cycle of frescoes at Orvieto, he did not need to select a subject; the theme was as if created for him: the *Last Judgment*, its *Approach*, *Heaven*, and *Hell*. Here, where there was nothing but nudes to be portrayed and he was not circumscribed by the size of the picture, his power grew into something tremendous. Had Fiesole, the beginner of the work, completed it, the spectator would have been led into a kingdom of eternal peace. Signorelli, on the other hand, changes heaven and hell into an anatomical theatre. Delicacy and tenderness of expression are not to be found, but in the manner in which he uses the nude to express emotion, developing psychical motives from physical action, there lies a

superhuman, a Titanic greatness. Here the dead are slowly and solemnly leaving their graves, some still ascending from the earth, others already risen and stretching their limbs as after a long sleep. There joy and blessedness prevail; knees are bowed, hands laid upon hearts and arms raised gratefully towards heaven. In the last painting *Hell* is an athletic drama. Monsters fly through the air; wild demons knead and strangle their victims as if with bronze tongs; nude bodies writhe in cramped convulsions on the ground or brace themselves up against crazing agony.

The tendencies which began with Mantegna and formed the life work of Pollajuolo thus found in Signorelli their consummation.

VII. Hugo van der Goes

In the meanwhile an abrupt change of scene had taken place in Florence. About the same time that Mantegna resided there, a picture had arrived from the Netherlands before which to-day one stands astonished in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Hugo van der Goes, the painter of this work, is known also from many similar works in German and Belgian galleries. In one of them at Brussels, a young Franciscan kneels in silent adoration before Mary in the midst of a yellowish-green autumn landscape. In an *Annunciation* at Munich, he attempts the very modern problem of creating a harmony in white. Instead of a warm and glowing tone, the picture was

THE LAST JUDGMENT (PART)
Fresco, Cathedral of Orvieto

intended to have a light and silvery effect, but it became hard, cold, and chalky. In his portraits he often frightens by phenomenal ugliness. It seemed as if he took delight in the mongrel when he painted Cardinal Bourbon looking like an old woman. A toilsome, troubled, and struggling element runs through his work; he appears as a tormented spirit, always undertaking new problems, but who in the course of the work lost confidence and inspiration.

What may be read from his pictures is confirmed by his biography. At first he was a pleasure-loving child of the world. The town council of Bruges summoned him when pompous processions were to be arranged, arches of honour to be erected, or banners painted with the festal images of antique heroes and goddesses. Wine, women, and song dominated his life. Suddenly he withdrew into the Augustinian convent in the wood of Soignies, to live only for the salvation of his soul. For a while two powers, the spirit of worldliness and the spirit of self-denial, struggled within him. He still rejoiced to take part in the sumptuous repasts of the noble lords who came to the monastery for portrait sittings; but such hours of worldly delight were followed by others of deepest despondency in which he considered himself eternally damned. Conscience-stricken, he now painted pictures devoted to the end of things and to the bitter sufferings of the Saviour. In a painting at Frankfort, Mary stands with the veil of a matron drawn over her head and gazes with solemn

earnestness upon the Child; in one at Venice the lifeless body of the Redeemer hangs in a gloomy landscape; in another, at Bruges, Mary lies upon her death-bed, while to her failing eyes the Redeemer appears in heavenly glory; and in still another, at Vienna, friends are mournfully taking the rigid body of our Lord down from the cross—the old theme which Roger so often painted. With Goes, however, there is no pathos and no wailing; everything is suppressed and deep, a hopeless woe, to which not even tears will bring relief. A pale woman, deserted and emaciated in appearance, the Magdalen silently folds her hands and gazes gloomily into space. Ravens flutter about the cross, which towers like a ghost into the clouded evening sky. But even such pictures do not express what Goes wishes to say. He conceived the strangest plans—visions of pictures for the completion of which one life seemed too short; for during the work he lost pleasure in it, and despaired of ever expressing the feelings that moved his heart. One day, with the cry, "I am damned," he collapsed. All the scruples of conscience which for years had martyred his soul ended in religious insanity, and henceforth only the resounding tones of the organ and the pious songs of the brethren gave relief to his torments.

His works show what a noble spirit was here crushed. The altar-piece with the *Adoration of the Kings* which, under the orders of Tommaso Portinari, the Medicean agent in Bruges, he painted for Santa

Maria Nuova, offers one of the most powerful artistic impressions to be experienced in Florence. The thought is as new as is the problem of light which he proposes. On a heap of straw, the Christ-child reclines, encircled by rays of light, which also illumine the kneeling Madonna. Languishing angels kneel about or hover in the air. One in particular, joyfully rising on gleaming wings to heaven, but still illumined by the divine light flooding the lower part of his clothing, might have been taken from the painting by Rembrandt. But we are also reminded of Böcklin. The manner in which light green branches stand out against the deep blue sky and the fire-red lily standing as a bold spot of colour in the foreground are conceptions of colour which belong much less in the fifteenth than at the end of the nineteenth century. In the garments dark blue, violet, green, and gloomy black tones of colour are united in accords never before heard. An indefinable charm is woven about the figure of the Madonna, who looks not like a maiden but like a woman who has experienced the mighty pains of childbirth. Old and sullen, with the callous hands of a labourer, and yet majestic as a doge by Tintoretto, Joseph stands near by. On the other side are the nude and weather-beaten figures of the shepherds, sun-browned, rough, and true: one of them kneeling, another gazing curiously, and a third approaching in breathless haste. Remembering the difficulties experienced by painters even of the seventeenth cenutry in avoiding caricature when paint-

ing peasant pictures, and recalling the grotesque boobies and drunken harlequins introduced by Brueghel and Ostade as peasants, one cannot but admire the great and simple realism of this master, who approaches Millet and Bastien-Lepage.

Even more impressive than this central panel are the wings of the altar. On the one side are saints, strange Jewish types of patriarchal, royal dignity. At their feet kneels the great grandson of Dante's Beatrice, Tommaso Portinari—a fine head with the solemn and reticent features of an aristocratic merchant; and at his side the pale, modest faces of his two boys, wondering what it is all about, and timidly, half mechanically folding their dainty fingers in prayer. The other wing is devoted to women of quiet and noble dignity: his wife, slender and delicate, his fair little daughter, fresh as a schoolgirl, and, behind them, their patron saints, Margaret and Mary Magdalen, dressed like princesses in grey, gold-bordered robes and shimmering white damask, with hair combed back and covered with a high and coquettish cap. Even the older artists celebrated Goes as the greatest painter of female portraits of this epoch. Van Mander speaks of their well-bred modesty and their sweet, demure appearance, as if Cupid and the Graces had guided the artist's brush—statements confirmed by the Portinari altar. The artist's strong and powerful characterisation of men does not prevent an equal success with women. To a subtle and distinguished bearing, almost affected in its

ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

girlish coyness, he adds a flowerlike grace; and at the same time a solemn melancholy lies in the pale, thoughtful heads, with dark eyes shaded by thin brows, and small, nervously twitching lips. The hands, in the case of men so hard and callous, are delicate and white, and as expressive as if they could themselves relate romances. With an austere charm he combines measured harmony and a grandeur of style, which makes quite intelligible that his highest ideal was fresco painting. Every theme is of a monumental sublimity such as no Flemish artist since Hubert van Eyck had attained.

Hand in hand with this grandeur of line goes an intimate quality of landscape painting such as had never yet appeared. Jan van Eyck, the first landscape painter of the Netherlands, had been attracted to his theme by the exotic taste of a tourist. As a widely travelled artist he presents to his simple countrymen, who had never got beyond Bruges or Ghent, all the gay splendour of the south. Even when he occasionally renders Flemish motives, there is something elaborate and overloaded about his landscapes. The same tendency which led him to represent his figures in rich robes, and to weave flowers and gold seams into their garments, caused him to paint lansdcapes much richer than they actually are. The most heterogeneous vegetation, palm-trees, sorbs, cypresses, and pines, he depicted as growing side by side, only to attain a rich effect and without regard for season and climate. In

place of this festal feeling of Jan van Eyck, Goes substitutes the intimate and the every-day. The first to feel that landscape did not need to be exotic and adorned, he revealed a taste for the simple nature that he saw about him; for acres, meadows, ponds, and trees. In the right panel of the altar just mentioned with the lofty trees, on whose bare branches crows have alighted, one gazes into a fallow winter landscape, sadly stretching out beneath a clouded sky. At the same time he penetrated more than did the earlier artists into the very structure of the landscape. While Jan placed flowers and trees carefully in his pictures, as children do with their toys, Goes was the first to examine their roots and leaves. The manner in which he paints trees is extraordinary. Each has its own physiognomy, and yet, with the finest calculation, all the lines are subordinated to the chief outlines of the figures.

Under the influence of this wonderful work an entirely new conception of nature must have originated, which, characteristically for the epoch, took root not in the Netherlands but in Italy. While it would hardly have found appreciation in the north, in the south painters streamed to see it. Piero della Francesca must have had it in mind when he painted his Oxford Madonna, and the *Birth of Christ* and the *Santa Conversazione* in the Brera. This is indicated by the type of the Madonna in the first named painting, the group of shepherds in the second, and in the third by the figure

of the saint to the left, which seems to have been taken directly from the Flemish altar-piece. Jean Foucquet, the Frenchman, must also have seen works of Goes; for the resemblance of his Étienne Chevalier, whom in the Berlin painting St. Stephen commends to the Madonna, to Goes's St. Victor is too striking to be accidental. Other adaptations may be seen in the works of Baldovinetti, Piero di Cosimo, Ghirlandajo, Lorenzo di Credi and Piero Pollajuolo, and it was under the impression of Goes's work that the Duke of Urbino summoned a Fleming, Justus van Ghent, to his court. It would be wrong, however, to emphasise only such details. The whole further development of Florentine art indicates that, next to the visit of Mantegna, the appearance of this Flemish altar-piece was regarded as the greatest artistic event of the decade between 1460 and 1470.[1]

Its influence is next revealed in the new colouristic tendencies of the painters. While, with the exception

[1] Professor Muther's view of the influence of van der Goes, and particularly of the Portinari altar-piece, upon Florentine painting is a very interesting as well as a novel one. The more detailed statement of the proofs which his promised larger work will doubtlessly contain, should prove most valuable. For the present, it seems to us that this influence is somewhat overrated. From a chronological point of view, it is difficult to conceive of a marked influence upon Piero della Francesca, who was some twenty years his senior, and whose style was certainly formed before he saw the Portinari altar-piece; and the same is true of other masters mentioned. The change in colouristic tendencies in Florentine art revealed in the work of Baldovinetti, the improved rendition of atmosphere practised by Verrocchio and the other changes noted were, in our opinion, due to tendencies which existed in Florentine art before the arrival of Goes's celebrated altar-piece.—Ed.

of Domenico Veneziano, they had not progressed beyond the primitive colouring of the Florentine school, they now cultivated the purely pictorial element. Even more than formerly ornaments, architecture, and landscape were introduced to increase the brightness of colour. Furthermore, the peasant figures of the altar-piece and its wonderfully painted animals stimulated the taste for rusticity. Another element new to Florentine art is evidently connected with the appearance of Goes's work—grace. In the earlier works of the fifteenth century, like those of Filippo Lippi and Gozzoli, a thoughtless and rather vulgar charm prevailed, and in Castagno the spirit of the *quattrocento* found expression in all its energy, manhood, and defiant strength. This tendency towards the powerful was now followed by an artistic trend, more feminine in character; and the distinguished delicacy and silent melancholy which beams from the eye of Goes's women now enters Florentine painting. In wholesome Italian art the fascinating charm of sickness appears. When suddenly all painters, as if by appointment, began to paint *Tobias* or the legend of the *Blind Man Restored to Sight*, it almost seems like homage to the great Fleming who opened their eyes and revealed to them new a beauty.

Alessio Baldovinetti was called by his training—for he was a pupil of Domenico Veneziano—to take up the new colouristic principles of the Netherlanders. Vasari describes him as a Flemish miniature-painter: rivers,

bridges, stones, grasses, fruits, paths, fields, villas, and palaces, all such things he painted after nature. In his *Birth of Christ* one can count the blades of straw and the roots of the ivy, the leaves of which are also painted true to nature, of deeper colour on the one side than on the other. One sees also a half-fallen house, the stones of which, weather-beaten by rain and frost, are covered with moss; a snake creeps along a wall. In fact, the group of shepherds in this picture, painted in the forecourt of Santa Annunziata, leaves no doubt that he was familiar with Goes's altar-piece. Not only in his gleaming colour did he follow the refined Fleming. Some of his pictures, like the *Annunciation* and the Madonna in the Duchatel collection, formerly ascribed to Piero della Francesca, characterise him as a delicate painter of women, who transformed the feminine trend of Goes (which likewise ran through the works of Domenico Veneziano) into an almost affected grace. In the last named painting the landscape also contributes a strange, romantic charm.

To ascribe this group to Verrocchio, the great sculptor in bronze, seems uncalled-for. For he is known as the artist who created in his *Colleoni* the most powerful equestrian statue of the *quattrocento*, and as the master of the *Baptism of Christ*, a harsh, ascetic picture with the two nude sinewy bodies, which is generally used to contrast the "dry realism" of Verrocchio with the celestial tenderness of his pupil Leonardo. Yet at bottom Verrocchio was not a harsh.

but a gentle spirit. Although he conceived the *Colleoni*, it was no longer as a man who had himself, like Donatello, lived in the age of the *condottieri*, but as the survivor of a vanished age, for whom this *Colleoni* meant the "last knight"—the symbol of a spur-clanging, heroically great past, to which the present looked up with sad astonishment. This thoughtful, dreamy present lives in the gracious head of his *David*, and in the dainty, almost coquettish pictures of the master, who in his portrait looks into the world as quiet and thoughtful as a Florentine Giambellini, and in no respect resembles the wild and defiant race to which Donatello and Castagno belonged. Castagno's *Pippo Spano* creates such a powerful impression because he wears his armour as unconcernedly as we a dressing gown. Verrocchio can only attain this impression artificially by adorning the armour of his hero with the serpents and heads of gorgons.

He may have received his first impressions from Mantegna, whom he approaches in the plastic finish of his figures. Well rounded bodies, tense lines, neatness and precision of outline, the greatest smoothness and finish of surfaces—everything that a good bronze cast should have he endeavours to reproduce. In addition to this he shows a goldsmith's delicacy in the finish of accessories; every ornament, the golden embroidery of the clothes as well as the dainty gauze veil which adorns Mary's head, is painted with the most careful accuracy. Goes strengthened him in these

colouristic tendencies. Verrocchio's workshop was the first one in Florence where oil-painting was systematically carried on. Under the influence of Goes, he also guided Florentine landscape painting into new paths. In contrast to the earlier Florentines, who had lost themselves in elaborate detail and caused the most distant objects to gleam in unbroken colours, Verrocchio had a taste for simple plains, which he depicted with certain *plein air* tendencies. His favourite hour was the twilight, when the trees stand out black from the light grey heaven and the cool moisture sinks over withered and dusty plains.

But even more characteristic of the impression of his pictures is the dainty grace which he endeavours to render in facial expression and motion. While the figures of Donatello and Castagno hold their hands wide open and extend the second finger, Verrocchio's merely bend the little finger—a detail which alone is significant of the change of taste: there, energy; here, an almost affected delicacy. *Noli me tangere* is the inscription upon his portrait of a girl in the Berlin Museum, which might also serve for Castagno's portrait of Pippo Spano, though in a very different sense. Verrocchio himself felt what a delicate, fragile ideal he substituted for the mighty, powerful figures of the older masters. He was the first to depict the dainty *putto* in place of their robust, healthy children; to give to the features of the Madonna a touch of that soft, enchanting smile associated with Leonardo's name.

His picture *Tobias* in the Florentine Academy probably contains the quintessence of his work. This subtle, maidenly youth with the wavy locks, striding in minuet step through the landscape, with bands and sashes clinging and fluttering in the breeze, and raising with mannered grace his fine, aristocratic hands—such a figure clearly reveals that the ideal of beauty cherished by this new generation was directly the opposite of what their fathers had honoured.

If Verrocchio, in his own works, at least, reminds us of the powerful past, Piero Pollajuolo is quite an offshoot of this new over-delicate age: as fine in feeling as he is weak, pale and dreamy; a Niels Lyhne of the *quattrocento*, oscillating between one master and another, and unable to stand without leaning in feminine devotion upon some stronger man. In his earliest work, the *Coronation of the Virgin* (1483) he is still dominated by his teacher Castagno, and attempts to be crude and powerful. But it is not in him to paint in this rugged fashion; and Hugo van der Goes furnished him an ideal more in accordance with his nature. The bearded man in his *Three Kings* is taken literally from the Flemish altar-piece. Like Baldovinetti, he then turned to colour and created the *Annunciation* of the Berlin Gallery, which in its deep glowing fire belongs to the greatest pictorial achievements of Florentine art. But he is most at home in those works in which he translates the daintiness of Verrocchio and the grace of Goes into an even

greater effeminacy. He is especially fond of painting limp, falling boot-legs—a symbol, by the way, of his own character. It seems as if the whole weariness of a sinking century weighed upon his small shoulders. A strange feeling of decadence exhales from these tender, languishing figures who are clothed so coquettishly, move their hands so affectedly, and so modestly tread the earth. Witness his *David* in Berlin, which might just as well have been painted by a modern Rosicrucian as by a son of the youthful *quattrocento;* or his *Tobias* in the Turin Gallery, with the nervous white lapdog and the mincing, affected beings, so timid, weakly, and over-delicate that they tremble at every noise. It might be said that this Tobias laying his little hand upon the arm of a strong man is Piero Pollajuolo himself, helpless the moment a stronger does not lead him. As he was fourteen years younger than his brother Antonio, one might think of the pampered helplessness of late-born children, if this soft, weary trait did not pervade the entire epoch. The strong were followed by the weak, the healthy by the nervous, and the conquerors by the weary aristocrats, wishing no longer to work but only to enjoy.

VIII. The Age of Lorenzo the Magnificent

Lorenzo the Magnificent embodied in his personality the age in which he lived. After the elder Cosimo, the wise and able banker who had collected the riches of the house of Medici, came his grandson who

enjoyed them. For Cosimo business stood in the foreground, and art was only a means of making an impression on the people. Lorenzo, who through his marriage with Clarice Orsini had invested their modern coat of arms with the lustre of an ancient house, was too much of the *grand seigneur* to soil his hands with money affairs. With him the patronage of art was an artistic predilection.

Reared in the midst of all the works of art which three generations of his family had collected, his eye was accustomed to the finest æsthetic enjoyment. He could suffer nothing ugly or plebeian about him; every object, whether it be furniture or ornament, gobelins or table furniture, must be a work of art, a jewel in itself. Festivals of costume, showy tournaments, and festal processions were arranged, because they disguised grey life with a brighter lustre. But not only the eye was delighted with the most costly enjoyment; a like cult was dedicated to all the senses. For the age of the Magnifico is also that of music and of love, of flowers and gastronomy.

A pronounced aristocratic tendency, a feeling of *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*, pervaded the age. While Cosimo had endeavoured to be one of the people, Lorenzo is a solitary man. As in Barrè's novel *Sous l'œil des barbares*, humanity is divided into two classes, the barbarians and the intelligent. The barbarians are all those who have to work and live a commonplace, every-day life; the intelligent are the chosen ones, the

élite of the spirit, the æsthetic connoisseurs, who in the midst of the plebeian world create for themselves an artificial paradise, where they live in association with works of art and books which suit their exquisite taste. As in the day when Horace wrote *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis*, country life is the ideal of the elect. Lorenzo seldom tarried in the city, but led, in his villas of Careggi, Caffagiolo, and Poggio a Cajano, the life of a country gentleman surrounded by choice spirits, who, like himself, considered themselves devotees of pure beauty. The Platonic Academy especially, founded by Cosimo de' Medici, acquired a new importance under Lorenzo. Although it had formerly been dedicated to learned studies it now became a voluntary association of friends, who, as "brothers in Plato," professed the cult of the senses and faith in the ancient gods of Greece. Christianity, as a universal religion, meant little to such æsthetes. They were so epicurean in matters of form that the Bible repelled them, because "the style of Holy Writ was bad." They assembled in Lorenzo's villa at Careggi, that charming building whose ruins even to-day are replete with the full charm of the early Renaissance. Wide, shadowy rows of columns surround a quiet court-yard in which a fountain dreamily patters, and from the windows of the high, graceful, simple rooms, the view extends over the blooming valley of the Arno and the hills of Fiesole adorned with villas, where pines and dark cypresses rise above grey olives and sun-

crowned laurel. To the clink of beakers and the music of the harp, they discussed Platonic dialogues or read new poems. If the heat was oppressive they fled into the woodland hills, as described by Landini in that passage so strangely recalling Boccaccio. They lay down in the silent coolness of the wood under lofty plantains; a brook rippled near by, and the view extended to the sea shimmering in the distance. In this secluded solitude, into which the sound of no church bells penetrated, they forgot that they were Christians and believed themselves Greeks as they philosophised about the conception of human happiness.

The poems of Poliziano and Lorenzo are the chief literary works of this select circle. Although not replete with deep thought, they are full of grace, the poetry of souls thirsting after beauty and tuned to Arcadian repose; who have fled from Golgotha to Olympus, from the present into a distant Elysium. Poliziano wrote his *Giostra*, a mythological poem in praise of the tournament which Giuliano de' Medici, the elegant and chivalric leader of the gilded youth, had held in honour of his Simonetta; and Lorenzo dedicated sonnets full of tender infatuation to his beloved Lucrezia Donati. These sonnets curiously illumine the ideal of beauty of this over-refined age. For what he treasured in woman was not a wholesome and robust, but a suffering beauty of ethereal pallor and with deathly sick, enchanting eyes—the beauty of consumption, from which Simonetta died.

The sentiment of Vergil's *Eclogues* pervades his *Nencia*, the jests of a joyful carnival his lightly clad *Canti di ballo;* and his *Corinto*, the love plaint of a shepherd, might have been written by a Greek idyllic poet and illustrated by Böcklin. Again and again he repeats the teaching of Horace to enjoy as long as one can enjoy, and the summons to live without whims and cares, to crown beakers and to enjoy life with song and dance; for so sounds the melancholy refrain: "One cannot know what the morrow will bring."

In these works repose the thoughts to which painters gave pictorial form. No remembrance of the suffering Nazarene and of bleeding martyrs should bring a false note into this Arcadian blessedness; but only idyllic pictures of Hellenic mythology, pleasing to the senses, were suitable for the villas which these æsthetes erected as oases in the desert of every-day life. A quite new variety of Arcadian and bucolic painting was created. For all those pictures which Lorenzo had painted for his villas, Signorelli's *Pan* as well as Botticelli's *Spring* and *Birth of Venus*, have nothing in common with the antique which Mantegna cherished. The latter was a great scholar who by means of science transplanted himself into antiquity, and who by the most careful study of costume and arms sought to reconstruct the epoch in an archæological manner. The painters of Lorenzo's circle might have done this also: for in the extensive gardens of San Marco whole rows of statues were erected along the avenues of trees,

and in the collections of Lorenzo hundreds of Greek vases and antique gems were preserved. What, however, they wished to depict was not the antique, but a Saturnian age, in which man, rejoicing in the senses, lived in unbroken joyful existence in blessed unity with nature. While Mantegna saw the antique world with the eyes of Menzel, they gazed at it as did Böcklin and Puvis de Chavannes. The land of the Greeks which the Paduan had sought with his intelligence, they sought with the soul, and would have said about Mantegna what Böcklin said of Menzel, "He is a great scholar." On the one hand a clear and intelligent classicism, on the other a romanticism flying from actuality into a dreamy Hellas as to a blessed shore, to repose in the land of poesy, and afterwards bring home sweet sentiments and beautiful pictures.

As these works revealed the spiritual, so Ghirlandajo's paintings reflect the external garb of the epoch. Although they seemingly portray biblical subjects, they are in truth only a glorification of a great age; when, as the inscription says, "Our most beautiful city of Florence, renowned for its riches, arts and buildings, lived in prosperity, health and peace." The thought that he was painting biblical subjects never seems to have entered Ghirlandajo's mind, in his commission from Lorenzo's cousin Giovanni Tornabuoni to paint the cycle of frescoes in the choir of Santa Maria Novella. He paints only the world which he sees about him, and in the festal garment of pleasure. The Florence of

BIRTH OF THE VIRGIN

Fresco in Santa Maria Novella, Florence

those days in its sincerity, its distinguished renown and its nobility of culture is immortalised in these paintings. One witnesses the pompous display of ecclesiastical pageantry, sees how marriages were celebrated, and is introduced into the lying-in room of a Florentine patrician lady. Other ladies with a worldly air, the *crême* of the Florentine aristrocacy, come to visit; very piquant with their irregular but delicate faces and their brocaded, dignified costume. Marble friezes, such as the Robbias had created, adorn the walls of the room. It must have been an event when all Florence streamed to see the portraits of these well known beauties, and to admire the ladies of the houses of Tornabuoni and Tornaquinci, Sassetti and Medici.

We must also thank Ghirlandajo for his faithfulness in portraying the culture of the age. It is his gift to us that the whole epoch stands so tangible and full of life before our eyes; and his pictures have the same interest as a lecture on the culture of the age of the Magnifico. But his artistic qualities also are impressive. While Gozzoli, who laboured in the same manner a generation earlier, did not rise above the level of a clever illustrator, in Ghirlandajo's pictures there is a great historic trend. There, easy complacency; here, a clear, serious composition and monumental dignity. Whereas Gozzoli, with relief-like breadth, overloads his mural surfaces with such a number of details that one interferes with the other, with Ghirlandajo a simple, forceful space composition prevails. He has developed

Benozzo's waggish chatter into a well-written oration, and clarified his naïve juxtaposition of single episodes into a classical lapidary style.

On the other hand this change involves no great personal service on the part of Ghirlandajo. The reason for his superiority consists merely in the fact that while Gozzoli could only avail himself of the achievements of Masaccio, Uccello and Castagno, Ghirlandajo had at his disposal those of a wider period. He is a greater space composer, because Piero della Francesca had created the laws of space composition; more dignified and simpler because Pollajuolo had taught the Florentines a sense for monumental simplicity. His figures have a corporal and not a flat, geometrical effect, like those of Gozzoli, because Verrocchio had taught the methods of achieving plasticity of form. The cast of his draperies and the antique monuments and ornaments which he uses in the background and as decorative accessories, are of a classical purity of style, because he had seen Rome, and because since the publication of Mantegna's line engravings the study of draperies had been systematically carried on in Florence. Sometimes he even surprises us with intimate details, with flowers and animals — because Hugo van der Goes had awakened taste for these things. Ghirlandajo made use of the entire capital in art that the age had collected, and availed himself of everything that the great investigators had established. While this raises him above Gozzoli, it also shows that Gozzoli signifies the

termination of an epoch. For as often as an epoch of art approaches its end the *éclaireurs* are followed by the *profiteurs*, who, instead of attempting new things, merely collect what has been already achieved.

In other respects as well, no further progress was possible along the path taken by Ghirlandajo. However much gratitude is due him for having transmitted with documentary fidelity a picture of that great age, it is nevertheless questionable whether the legends of John and Mary are a proper pretext for furnishing contemporary fashion plates. Religious feeling is no longer to be found in his paintings; the last vestige of piety which the fourteenth century had retained is eliminated. Even the legend of St. Francis which Giotto had painted with such serious sublimity becomes in Ghirlandajo's hands a representation of ecclesiastical ceremonies and architectural scenes. The Paul Veronese of the *quattrocento*, he has rendered biblical subjects in a more worldly style than any of his predecessors. While even in Gozzoli's works there still exists a story-telling sentiment, a certain rustic patriarchal air suitable for biblical themes, with Ghirlandajo they have become social episodes of the *salon* and worldly representations of society. By his well-known expression of regret that, after he had acquired a mastery of this kind of art, he could not decorate the entire city walls of Florence, he has himself betrayed how purely superficial his conception of his profession was.

Although in his altar-pieces the translation of biblical into modern subjects is less conspicuous, they offer a logical commentary of this transformation. They are able, but prosaic, sober and crude. An experienced business man, he carried on the painting of altar-pieces as a factory owner would have done, never refusing a commission. This explains why his works possess neither psychic qualities nor colouristic charm. Glaring red and blue colours, fresh from the tube, stand side by side. Pictures which for Fiesole would have been soul-confessions are for Ghirlandajo articles of commerce, which he executes with the help of his apprentices, as well as may be, in his shop.

It is easy to understand how, in an age no longer possessing Christian ideals, whose choice spirits made pilgrimages into the land of the Hellenes, religious painting also acquired the same mundane or else a purely manufactured character. It is impressive to find a view of life which no longer recognised a Christian heaven expressing itself with such candour. But one also understands why, in consequence of the store of religious feeling which still existed, such an art as Ghirlandajo's must be followed by the severest reaction.

Chapter III

The Religious Reaction

1. Savonarola

"Di doman non è certezza."

LORENZO himself had still to experience this. When at the close of his life he wrote his *Laudi*, a strange change had transformed him. The exuberant poet of the carnival songs discusses the gloomy problem of human fate, demands to know the wherefore of life, speaks of the evil hours of an inner void and of the pale terror that affrights the soul. It was in such a moment of inner void that he sent from his sick-bed in the Villa Careggi to the cloister of San Marco to summon the Dominican prior Girolamo Savonarola to console him and grant absolution. At the death-bed of the favourite of the Graces the great reformer stood long and silently—a gloomy, threatening phantom, transfixing the dying man with his eagle eye—then turned away and departed without granting absolution.

The years of theocratic rule have now dawned. The Platonism of the aristocratic circles could not satisfy the feelings, and repletion reigned after the long intoxicating dream of beauty; a burning desire for salvation after earthly pleasures, and puritanical fanaticism after the cult of the senses and the pleasure-loving epicureanism of the past. Savanarola belonged to those rare men who come at the right hour. The same little monastery of San Marco, where in Fiesole's time St. Antoninus had laboured, now became once more the bulwark of Christianity. The ideas of asceticism and renunciation which at that time only existed in narrow monastic circles were carried by Savonarola to the passionately excited masses. To the enticing ideals of antiquity, the siren song of sensual pleasure and of antique beauty, he opposed the power of a thousand years of ecclesiastical traditions and the gloomy passion of a religious life. As early as January, 1491, Savonarola had begun his penitential sermons in Santa Maria del Fiore, and in a few months Florence was changed. Like a storm his inspired word fell upon the pleasure-loving masses. It seemed as if a prophet from on high had come down from heaven to call the luxurious city to penance and contrition. Ecclesiastical processions took the place of worldly festivals, and exuberant carnival songs were succeeded by spiritual hymns of praise. The number of his adherents increased daily. Even though the Pope threatened excommunication and the aristocratic circles raged

against the demagogue, with the cry "Viva Cristo" the electrified masses surged about, and dervish-like scenes reminding one of the processions of Flagellants in the middle ages began. The house of Medici no longer reigned; but Jesus Christ, *populi Florentini decreto creatus*, was in proper person King and Lord Protector of Florence. The *Auto da fé* of vanities arranged for the carnival of 1497, probably marks the summit of his activity as an agitator. Thirteen hundred children, marching from house to house, demanded and collected the tinsel of this world. Silken clothes and musical instruments, carpets and editions of the *Decamerone*, antique authors and mythological pictures —all were piled into a high pyramid, and the smoke mounted to heaven. Women and maidens crowned with olive branches danced around the blazing pile in mystic ecstasy, offering rings, bracelets, or whatever ornaments they possessed to the flames. A dæmonic, hypnotic power must have proceeded from the great zealot; for even Mirandola, the friend of the Magnifico, relates that he trembled and his hair stood on end, when listening to one of the fanatical sermons of the Dominican friar.

Against art too he hurled his ban: "Aristotle, who was a heathen, says in his *Poetics* that immodest figures should not be painted, lest children be corrupted by the sight. What shall I then say to you, ye Christian painters, who expose half-nude figures to the eye?

That is a thing of evil which must cease. But ye who possess such paintings, destroy them or paint them over and ye will then do a work pleasing to God and the Blessed Virgin." As he thundered against the representation of the nude, so he protested against the introduction of contemporary portraits into religious paintings: "The figures which ye have painted in your church are the figures of your gods. Nevertheless, young people may say when they meet this or that person, 'This is Magdalen, that is St. John.' For the pictures of your wantons ye cause to be painted as saints in the churches, thus dragging that which is divine into the dust, and bringing vanity into the house of the Eternal One. Think ye that the Virgin Mary was so clothed as ye paint her? I say unto you, that she wore the clothes of the poor, but ye paint her as a woman of the streets."

The injury done to art by this great ecclesiastical reaction, which changed the new Athens into a second Geneva, as intolerant as the capital of Calvin, has often been described. If the representations of the antique in the fifteenth century never progressed beyond beginnings, and the gods of Greece for whom Lorenzo prepared a home had again to flee from Italy, this is entirely due to the teaching of Savonarola. In consequence of his zeal against contemporary portraits and modern costume, the wholesome relation of art to life was lost. On the other hand, he offered a

substitute for that which he destroyed and gave back to art what she had lost in the days of Lorenzo: her Christian ideals, which he showed in a light which made them seem to have become quite new. When in his sermons he speaks of the maternal love of Mary, of her timid prophetic soul, gazing with a pathetic glance into the future, when he describes her as a somnambulist living from day to day in painful anticipation of a coming fate, or represents her as a poor, simple maiden unable to comprehend the mercy shown her in being the chosen of heaven—all these things reveal the far deeper ideal of the Madonna with which he inspired painters. "Beautiful alone is the beauty of the soul. Behold a pious person, whether man or woman, who is inspired of the Holy Ghost; observe him when he prays and a heavenly inspiration seizes him; then ye shall see the beauty of God beaming from his face, and his features will have the expression of an angel." In such words a whole new programme for art was given. And the artists, each after his own fashion, took sides in regard to the preacher of penance. For one he was an evil demon, for another the Holy Ghost; this one he robbed of his ideals, that one he assisted to discover himself. Standing in the midst of these passionate disturbances, art also was shaken by the spiritual fever which streamed through the veins of the whole people.

III. Piero di Cosimo

For Piero di Cosimo, Savonarola proved an evil genius; for he destroyed his world of fables and drove him from the enchanted domain which he had built for himself in gleaming splendour: where fabulous beings glided through the air; where stately knights and captive princesses, three-headed gaints, and enchanted heathen deities frightened and loved, fought and teased each other. If any one, then, Piero di Cosimo is the true child of the age of the Magnifico, the kindred spirit of those bucolic poets who played with the ancient myths with such a coy and gracious charm.

Although usually accounted a pupil of the dull and clumsy Cosimo Roselli, he was in reality a follower of Hugo van der Goes. From him he acquired the sense of rusticity and of beautiful luminous colours, his taste for the intimate observation of plant and animal life, and his pleasure in sunlight playing upon faces, flowers, and clothes. Especially characteristic for the Netherlandish spirit of his art is the Berlin picture of the *Adoration of the Shepherds*. No festal splendour, but rather a rustic charm pervades the representation. Mary folds her hands devoutly; a coarse-grained shepherd, with a little goat under his arm, raises his great greyish-yellow hat. A sunbeam strikes his weather-browned face, light brown coat, and bluish-gray hose. The landscape is simple and modest in

design, and bathed in even light; and the pale green or delicate yellow leaves of the lofty trees stand out daintily against the blue firmament. The rustic character of the picture is further heightened by a heap of vegetables, the thatched roof of the hut, and the powerful animals.

This primitive, yet confidential manner, which has nothing in common with the light elegance of the Italians, pervades also his other works. A Madonna in the Louvre looks more like a Dutch market woman than an Italian picture of the Virgin. A simple peasant woman in plain, homely clothes, she wears a striped light blue head-dress, tucked under her chin and knotted at the ends—a delightfully artistic motive which never occurs in Italian paintings. In the foreground a white dove and a book bound in red are arranged quite in the manner of Flemish still-life. In other paintings he is occupied with the analysis of light. Quite in the sense of Ghirlandajo he has given in his *Magdalen* the portrait of a richly dressed young lady. But this lady stands at the window, through which the sunlight floods the room, enveloping the figure in bright light; gleaming upon her cheeks, skipping over her hair, glimmering upon pearls and rubies, and refracting in a thousand colours upon her dark green dress. Other Flemish traits are the use of the three-quarter instead of the Italian profile view, and the still-life, consisting of salve-box, paper, and book, which he has grouped upon the window-sill. The window-

sill is very skilfully used to exhibit the third dimension and to increase the plastic impression of space.

In other pictures again he charms by his close observation of animal and vegetable life. In the *Adoration of the Christ-child*, painted for Lorenzo de' Medici, a brooklet ripples over the pebbles; a starling sits near a tree trunk, and in the foreground flowers sparkle in the green grass of the meadow. There is hardly a picture of his in which animals do not occur; such as pigs, rabbits, or pigeons, ducks, cranes, or swans. He is everywhere recognisable by the botanical faithfulness with which he paints palm and olive trees, clusters of myrtle, heads of grain, tulips, primroses, and daisies. Yet, with all this richness of detail, his landscapes are impressive by reason of their broad and distant views and their mighty simple line. One feels that he did not adorn nature, as the earlier painters had done, but, like Goes, portrayed her as a simple analyser.

The impression made by his paintings is confirmed by what we know of his life. Vasari relates that he always locked himself in his workshop and would not permit others to see him paint; which shows to what extent he considered himself a technical experimenter, and was conscious that he had discovered Goes's secrets of colour, which he wished to preserve as his own property—just as Leonardo used backhand writing in order to guard his manuscripts from unwelcome eyes.

Vasari further relates that Piero would not suffer any one to cut the fruit in his garden, but let the grape vines grow wild, maintaining that we should let nature take her own course rather than endeavour to make something else out of her. This reminds us of Bousseau's theory that everything is good just as it has sprung from the lap of nature, the mother of all, and at the same time shows the cause of the realism of his landscapes, which also reproduce nature without "desecrating by improvement." It is further related that Piero lived only on eggs; and even this abstinence, seemingly the caprice of an eccentric spirit, is closely connected with the pantheistic views of the master, who was such a friendly observer of animals, and, after Goes, created the first important animal-pieces in modern art.

But this habit of intimate observation is only one side of Piero's nature; hand in hand with it goes a trend towards the fantastic. The same man who observed nature with such a bright and acute eye also listened for the sound of lost melodies, soft and low. Weird beings appeared to him, fantastic yet serious; and the figures of the legends, mounted upon strange animals, glide through space. A fabulous hippogriff carries him into lost worlds of beauty, to Greece, the Orient, and Utopia. "This youth," says Vasari, "was blessed by nature with much intelligence and was very different in his strange notions from the other young people who worked at the same time with Cosimo Roselli. Often

when he wished to relate something it seemed as if he suddenly no longer knew what he was talking about, and he had to begin anew because his mind had in the meanwhile become occupied with quite different things. At the same time he was so fond of solitude that he only felt comfortable when he could go about alone, devoting himself to fantastic thoughts and building air castles." [1] From this and the succeeding description it is evident that, long before Leonardo, he had followed the advice which the latter gave to young artists in his treatise on painting: "If thou hast a situation to invent, thou canst behold strange things in clouds and weather-beaten walls: beautiful landscapes adorned with mountains, views, cliffs, trees, great plains, valleys, and hills. Thou canst see all kinds of battles there, dramatic positions, strange figures, faces, and clothes. In viewing such walls and mixtures the same thing occurs as in listening to the sound of bells, in the peals of which thou wilt again find every name and every word which thou dost imagine."

Piero's talent for the fantastic revealed itself earliest in the carnival processions which he arranged for the aristocratic young gentlemen of Florence. Vasari relates that he designed entire triumphal processions, with music and verses which had been made for this purpose. There were men on horseback and on foot

[1] While the author's translation of Vasari is not a literal one, it embodies the entire sense of the original in better and briefer form.—Ed.

and everything was of incredible pomp, the clothes corresponding strictly with the picture represented. It was beautiful to see at night about thirty horses mounted by knights in magnificent costumes, each one attended by six or eight pages, lance in hand, and then the triumphal chariot adorned with trophies and fantastic ornaments. At a time when painting was still practically confined to the traditional religious subjects, fantasies could only find vent in such ephemeral representations. Through the journey to Rome, which in 1482 he made in company with his teacher Roselli, this trend towards the fantastic was guided into a firm course. The radiant and wonderful antique world and the charm of the ancient legend were revealed to him. His imagination, which formerly had not known how to occupy itself or what course to take, now found a sure aim. The antique world was for him a lost, enchanted kingdom, where witchcraft and love, adventure and knighthood reigned. He leads us into the deep forest where satyrs and nymphs dwell; to the seashore where courageous knights fight against dragons to release captive princesses. Sometimes the prevailing note of his pictures is the coy, jesting tone which laughs from Boccaccio's *Genealogia Deorum;* at others the romantic longing which echoes from the verses of the Magnifico; then again a very modern feeling, reminding of Lohengrin or Nickelmann.

Like an antique legend set to Offenbach's music is the

effect of his picture which, following Poliziano's *Silvae*, portrays the *Finding of Hylas*. A nymph has found the handsome youth, the favourite of Hercules, in a flowery meadow; and like dogs scenting the game all the maidens hurry to the scene to admire the nude boy. Each one wants him for herself. One brings him flowers, another fruits, a third a little dog; another is so fascinated with the sight that, stopping with wide-spread limbs, her hands on her thighs, she stares at the lad like one crazed and in her excitement drops all the flowers. The fat Tritons, gazing on the bathing Naiads in Böcklin's *Play of the Waves* do not look more astonished than Piero's nymphs. His *Venus and Mars* in Berlin is a shepherd's idyl of mischievous charm. Cupids play with the armour of Mars, and doves lock bills; a red butterfly has lighted on the knee of Venus, and a little rabbit nestling to her intelligently pricks its ears, as if sniffing the perfume of her body. In the picture of the *Liberation of Andromeda*, Perseus, with yellow cuirass, blue tabard, fluttering sash, and red hose, flies through the air like a burlesque Lohengrin, and the dragon clumsily coils itself like a primeval Fafner.

According to Vasari, Piero for a long time laboured exclusively with such subjects. He had found the true direction for his activity, and was inexhaustible in the invention of fabulous monsters and strange hobgoblins. Centaurs and satyrs storm about, Lapithæ struggle, and Prometheus brings down fire from

heaven. In his fantasy the whole space of the earth is peopled with spirits, and the air with legions of strange beings. It seemed as if, after a thousand years slumber, old Pan had awakened again. Probably the most beautiful of these subjects is the *Dead Procris* in London, a lovely ideal of Böcklinesque charm. Her tender body lies upon a sweet-scented, blooming meadow, and a faun kneels beside her, unable to believe that the daughter of Erechtheus is dead. Silently he bends over, seeking to raise her head, and glances into her eyes. The picture is pervaded by a romantic Hellenism and a deep melancholy. Not only the dog, her faithful guardian, sitting near, but the very landscape mourns; like the branches of a weeping willow the shrubbery hangs down. Piero, the merry knave, has become serious and thoughtful: one almost believes that in the mourning faun he has painted himself, and in the dead Procris his art.

For when the penitential sermons of Savonarola thundered, it was all over with the joyful fables. Gay antiquity was again followed by the gloomy middle age, and merry sensual pleasure by sanguinary asceticism. Although he even tried it for a time, Piero, the heathen, could not accommodate himself to the change. The *Holy Family* in Dresden is probably his first concession to the Dominican. His landscape, formerly flowery, has become rocky and desolate, and bare trees stretch their branches towards heaven. St. John, formerly the playfellow of the Christ-child, now timidly

approaches him with the cross; mighty angels' wings, indistinct as clouds, spread over the landscape. In the *Immaculate Conception* of the Florentine Academy he even rises to a great achievement in the sense of the new spiritualism. The very theme shows the spirit of the Counter-reformation casting its shadow before, being the first representation of the incident to the glorification of which Murillo afterwards dedicated his art. In this painting the heads are full of ecstatic devotion, and he has actually succeeded in attaining the pitch of religious excitement which thrilled the age. But this excitement did not last long. Although he lived to paint many religious pictures, his personality was lost. At one time it is Signorelli, at another Leonardo or Fra Bartolommeo whom he imitates, and he feels that his labour is forced. The moment he no longer expresses himself he is no longer the peer of the others. He begins his panels in discouragement, to end them either in a forced manner or not at all. Under the pretext of painting portraits he occasionally ventures upon a modest excursion into his old domain: like his uncanny *Cleopatra*, the nude woman with the oriental shawl, about whose necklace a greenish-yellow snake is curled. But one feels that a man in whose soul a chord had snapped painted this picture; so shrill is the dissonance between the tropical, exuberant character of Cleopatra and the desolate hungry landscape with the withered trees presented as a background; so devilish is the contrast between this pale profile

THE DEATH OF PROCRIS

National Gallery, London

and black masses of clouds which gather behind it. The portraits of the musician Francesco Giamberti and the architect Giuliano da Sangallo at the Hague also belong to this period. They were surely no commissions, but the portraits of friends; embittered people with whom he, like Gottfried Keller, associated in the evening over a *fiasco* of Chianti, to denounce the change of times: Giuliano gazing with dull, imbecile eye, and the other a toothless old idealist, who has angrily cocked his great cap over one ear. The landscape is so little suitable to the allegorical accessories, that one would imagine he had painted these heads over previous landscape studies.

The life-blood of his art had been sapped by Savonarola. The Christian ideals which had again become omnipotent left no room for fantasy. The figures of the saints had again to be painted in accordance with the strict canons that had for centuries prevailed. But once more his old pleasure in carnival processions awakened, and he resolved to express himself freely in mummeries. The carnival procession which he designed in 1507 brought for the last time his name on every tongue. But what had Savonarola made of the jolly Piero! The procession exhibited, as Vasari relates, "the triumphant chariot of Death drawn by buffaloes, quite black and painted with bones and white crosses. The figure of Death, scythe in hand, was seated upon it, and coffins followed. When the procession paused and sang, the lids of the coffins

opened, and skeletons appeared wrapped in black grave-clothes upon which the bones and ribs had been painted so naturally that one shuddered to behold it. Then shrill trumpet blasts sounded, at which the dead half arose from their coffins, sat up and with wailing voices sang: 'Dolor, pianto e penitenzia.' Behind the chariot dead men rode upon horses which he had carefully selected from the leanest in the city. Upon the black covers, white crosses were painted. Every man had four pages, who were also dressed as dead, carrying in their hands black lances and great black standards adorned with crosses and death heads. Other corpses, clad in black cloth, marched beside the chariot singing with wailing voices, 'Miserere mei, deus.'"

Although he lived ten years longer no one was heard to speak of Piero after this. He even dismissed his pupils. He painted many pictures, like the representation from the *Legend of Andromeda* in the Uffizi, but they were only works executed to kill time; joyless repetitions, drawn with trembling hand, of that which he had portrayed with such charming spirit in his youth. When it rained he would go out into the street to observe how the raindrops sprinkled the earth: such, he said, was human fate. When a storm came he would sit in the corner of the room, trembling as if pursued by spirits. Misanthropic, friendless, and neglected, he lived on, a fantastic without means of existence, awaiting death. Only when he heard the church bells

and the chant of priests he would awaken from his apathy and angrily clench his fists; for church bells and priests' chants had killed his art. One morning he was found dead on the doorstep.

III. Botticelli

Botticelli was affected in quite a different way by the tragedy of Savonarola. Indeed, considering his youthful works, it might seem that the religious revival should be traced to him rather than to the preacher of San Marco. For what Savonarola preached, Botticelli had previously painted.

His youth fell in the age which was tired of dreaming and wished only to investigate and observe. Fra Filippo, the jolly Carmelite, was his first teacher, and after he had left Florence he attached himself to the great technicians Verrocchio and Pollajuolo, from whom he learned colour, anatomy, and perspective. But even his early works show that he used the forms derived from his teachers to express a sentiment quite different from theirs. In the midst of a time without spiritual tendencies, Botticelli penetrated anew the unfathomable depths of religious emotion; and among a group of realists he stands alone as a mystic enthusiast in a world apart from the rest. The joy in nature and the laughing optimism of the others he confronted, even at that time, with the solemn ecclesiasticism of the middle age, painting pictures which were a protest of a dreamy and sensitive soul against the prosaic

objectivity reigning about him. The works of the older painters are sensible, sober, and clear, his are full of ecstatic emotion and dreams; a romanticism which, longing for the home of the soul, flies back to the middle age, strong in belief, and weaves about it all the charms of mysticism.

Three pictures in the Uffizi—*La Fortezza*, a small *Judith*, and the *Finding of the Body of Holofernes*—and also the *St. Sebastian* in the Berlin Gallery show how, beginning as a pupil of Pollajuolo, he nevertheless differed from him in the soft, melancholy trend of his art. Similarly, while strictly following in several Madonnas the types of his teachers, he differs from them in that he never introduces genre subjects or jolly episodes, but conceives his paintings as the bearers of symbolic thoughts. The Madonna looks thoughtfully upon the crown of thorns and the nails, which the Christ-child innocently, unsuspectingly holds, or else a curly-haired angel offers her grapes and ears of wheat, the symbol of the sacrifice. In the place of the fresh worldliness of Fra Filippo, Botticelli's works reveal the presence of a mystic and transcendental, a solemn and sacramental element. While the realists in their Madonnas portray the joys of motherhood, Botticelli's know no joy whatever. Mary appears gloomy and lost in thought, as if, even when she presses the Christ-child to her bosom, a foreboding of coming suffering casts its shadow over her soul. But generally the artist quite removes her into the heavenly spheres,

and he is more solemn and effective with the mediæval theme of the Queen of Heaven. Saintly men, solemn and severe as Dürer's *Four Apostles*, assemble, like the protectors of the Holy Grail, around her throne; or else angels draw back the curtains of the baldachin and place the crown upon her head. In these paintings, so different in their solemn contemplative feeling from the joyful prosaic art of Filippo, his teacher, all reminiscences of earlier forms have also disappeared. A new type of the Madonna, independently created by Botticelli, enters the domain of art. She is no longer the mother, but a pale, thoughtful maiden, who seems only to be in the world to pine away like an unopened bud, and of such a silent melancholy as if the end of the earth were nigh. No joy in life, no sunshine and no hope is left. Pale and quivering are her lips, and a tired, world-weary expression plays about her mouth. In the eyes of the Christ-child, too, a secret dawns, as if foreboding the purpose for which it was chosen. This is no playful child, but the Saviour of the world, solemnly blessing or looking thoughtfully upward as if under an inspiration. Even the angels, unlike Fra Filippo's self-willed boys, here performed their office in contemplative solemnity; not playfellows of the Christ-child but prophetic beings, who gaze with deep pity upon the world of sorrows, and dedicate with longing devotion and timid hesitation their services to the Son of God.

In the manner, also, in which he treats costume and

uses flowers to heighten the sentiment, he has more in common with the *trecento* than with his realistic contemporaries. Instead of clothing the Madonna in the fashionable costume of the day, he envelops her in a great mantle, decked with flowers and adorned with gold and lace, which alone suffices to give the impression of elaborate solemnity. For the clothing of the angels he reverts to the Greek *chiton*, to which he adds articles selected from the ancient ecclesiastical garb: the alb, stole, and amice. Entire still-life scenes, composed of fruits and flowers, and artistic niches of cypress branches and thick palm leaves envelop the figures; and the angels press forward bedecked with wreaths of roses, bearing vases, candles, and lily stalks. He only needs to apply the brush, and we are transported into a wide and lofty cathedral where the odor of incense mounts to heaven and a thousand great white candles flicker. We see solemn processions with flower-decked baldachins marching across the floor strewn with roses, and hear the silvery voices of children singing the praises of the Infinite One.

The *Magnificat*, which, to the contemplative delight of thousands, hangs in a gallery of honour in the Uffizi, and the *Madonna of the Palms* in the Berlin Museum are the most characteristic examples of such works. The former has such an unspeakable character of grandeur and sublimity that the beholder fancies he is listening to the mighty, solemn tones of an organ mingling with angel choirs. The word "Magnificat,"

THE MAGNIFICAT

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

which the Madonna is writing, sounds through the whole painting. The Berlin picture owes to its floral decoration the solemn and festal effect. An arbour of palms, from the dark leaves of which white blooming myrtle gleams, forms the vault above the pale, maidenly Mary, while the sweet perfume of roses, lilies, and innumerable flowers fills the air about. The whole psychology of the perfume of flowers, which we are so fond of claiming for the nineteenth century, was anticipated by Botticelli. All those rose-crowned angels approaching the Blessed One, bearing lighted candles wound about with flowers, or holding with hieratic stiffness the long stalks of lilies in their white trembling hands—while admiring them in the paintings of Burne-Jones, we often forget that they originated with Botticelli.

A fresco of this period, *St. Augustine*, in the church of Oganissanti, often shows how different his taste is from that of a realist. While in the pendant representing *St. Jerome* Ghirlandajo has simply attired an elderly Florentine gentleman as a saint, Botticelli's *Augustine* gazes with the eyes of a visionary into the distance, his hands pressed upon his breast, as if to control his excitement over the revelation which he has just received. His frescoes in the Sistine Chapel are no paintings, but learned discussions and interpretations of theological wisdom, hardly excelled in their severe dogmatism by the works of the Dominican painters of the fourteenth century. In the midst

of an art which hated everything symbolic, which depicted not thoughts but actualities, and which never wished to invent, but observe and relate, Botticelli stands alone as a thinker who has much in common with the art of the *trecento*, so rich in ideals, as with the heavy thoughtfulness of the German Cornelius.

That such a sensitive and impressionable mind could not remain untouched by the splendour of the antique world, is a matter of course. However little his style may have been influenced by the antique—for there is nothing less antique than these slender forms, these restless, ruffled and puffed draperies—his backgrounds, nevertheless, betray the enthusiasm with which he studied the remains of antiquity. From the time of his stay at Rome, ancient buildings, sculptures, and gems occur frequently in his works. In one of his frescoes of the Sistine Chapel he has painted the arch of Constantine and in the background of another the group of the *Disocuri* of the Quirinal. The portrait of a young girl in the Frankfort Museum wears as a necklace an antique gem carved with the images of Apollo and Marsyas. At that time every heathen temple and triumphal arch had a particular legend; and it was just this mystery enveloping the antique which attracted a dreamer and a brooder like Botticelli.

When he returned to Florence the harvest of humanism was ripe. He entered the circles of the æsthetes collected about the Magnifico, and was for several

years a guest in Lorenzo's house, dining at his table. Most of his mythological pictures were painted for the Villa Careggi. It is principally of these works, painted for the Medici, that we think when Botticelli's name is mentioned. Everybody knows that from these entrancing paintings is wafted a perfume of youth, purity, and grace, identifying Botticelli himself with the springtime which in the principal one he glorified. In his *Pallas* the head of the goddess, with its soft full outlines and long wavy hair, is of such radiant beauty and so different from the harsh type of Simonetta, which usually recurs in his works, that one thinks of the transcendental sweetness of Leonardo da Vinci. In the figures of his remaining paintings the grace of slenderness prevails, together with a certain dreamy and transfigured expression which heightens the mysterious effect. If his *Birth of Venus* had been painted thirty years later by the clever decorators of Rome or Venice, they would have painted geniuses fluttering through the air, gods reclining in the clouds, and all Olympus in a state of commotion, and the result would have been a picture like Raphael's *Triumph of Galatea.* Botticelli, on the other hand, develops the sentiment from the landscape, the wide and endless ocean, upon whose quietly rippling waves the Cyprian goddess is wafted like a fair dreamland picture. The ringing of bells, the song of voices, and the rustling of garments is in the air; a longing, dreamy feeling pervades the entire earth.

A midsummer night's dream has taken form in his *Primavera*, with its nymph-like graceful beings which seem like an anticipation of Böcklin. Botticelli was the first to see the elves dance. Slender Dryads who housed in a thicket of the wood beside bubbling springs, have come to take part in the dance of spring. It is wonderful how in these paintings also he uses flowers to enhance the effect. Olive branches encircle *Pallas* and crown her head, and in the *Birth of Venus* the mantle of the Hour is decked with flowers of spring, and the wind god strews roses in the air. In the *Primavera* oranges and myrtles shimmer; golden fruits and white blossoms gleam from the dark foliage.[1] Like the Sleeping Beauty of the fable, *Primavera* is enveloped with wild roses; flowers of the meadow encompass her neck; blue cornflowers and white primroses are entwined in her fair hair. Buds of the springtime, anemones, tulips, and narcissus, she lightly scatters over the earth. Botticelli appears as a perfectly charming mannerist in his treatment of draperies, these transparent veils and fluttering bands. None before him used such fine gauze draperies, clinging tightly to the limbs and clearly revealing the flower-like forms.

And yet, however magically beautiful these pictures

[1] The *Birth of Venus* is now in the Florentine Academy, and *Primavera* is in the Uffizi Gallery. In an excellent monograph, *Geburt der Venus und Frühling* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1893), Dr. Warburg has shown that the latter picture was painted after a poem by Poliziano, entitled the *Realm of Venus* which is also the more correct title for the painting.—Ed.

LA PRIMAVERA
Accademia, Florence

are, even though they be the finest survivals of that glorious day in which the gods of Greece were called from exile, there is nevertheless something lacking, a dissonance between the joyous fables which he relates and the style in which he does it. The poetry of Lorenzo il Magnifico and of Poliziano, which gave the inspiration for these works, is pervaded by the love of pleasure and an epicurean joyfulness; it is a poesy of sensual Arcadian souls who have quite forgotten that they are Christians. Botticelli's paintings, on the other hand, possessed nothing of this bucolic repose, nothing of the joyful fable and the quaint charm which pervades those of Piero di Cosimo. That he could not laugh is clearly shown where he forces himself to do so—in such an example as *Mars and Venus* in the National Gallery (London). A beautiful woman, a nude youth, cupids, a southern landscape, thin draperies, and glittering accessories—such are the elements of the picture; and yet the impression does not correspond with them. Mars resembles the crucified Saviour; his mouth is distorted by pain, and he does not sleep, but breathes heavily as if oppressed by a nightmare. Equally unpleasant, with a cold murderous glance like Klinger's bust of Salome, Venus looks upon the sleeping hero. Is this the bliss which the immortal gods enjoy in heavenly repose? Is this the love-goddess of the Hellenes? Even when Botticelli ventures to paint her nude, there is something ghostly about her, staring with green eyes, like a mermaid,

into the infinite, or with a melancholy smile pervading her trembling lips. Far from resembling the joyous mistress of the war-god, she is rather like the red-haired she-devil of the middle age, passing in her exile by the cross upon which the Son of Man hangs crucified. A weary dreaminess or a resigned sadness is characteristic of all of his figures. It seems as if these women were about to enter the convent to do penance for their sins of the flesh. The classic clearness of heathen mythology is combined with a Catholic mysticism; a breath of monkish asceticism represses joy.

Botticelli did not feel himself at home in the Hill of Venus. It seemed as if he had been followed by the thought of a purer ideal, the chaste Mary to whom he sang his first hymns. With all the filaments of his soul rooted in the middle age, he shuddered at the heathen enthusiasm which for a time beclouded his soul like a delirium. His pictures of the antique world seem to have been painted as if with hesitation, as if an unseen hand held him back. From the last of them, *Calumny*, after Lucian's description of a painting by Apelles, and now in the Uffizi Gallery, a shrill cry of despair sounds. An action stormy beyond measure, the restlessness of fluttering garments, and a wild, uncanny expression of countenance appear in place of his usual quiet beauty of line and repressed melancholy. One feels that a man shattered by physical discontent painted this almost insane picture.

Most terrible of all is the figure of Repentance, an emaciated, grief-stricken old woman, clothed in torn mourning garments, who, stretching her bloodless, spider-like fingers, totters forward, timid and trembling. Botticelli regretted his tarrying in the Hill of Venus. But what power could lead him back into the community of the pure, him, the Christian, who had sacrificed to strange gods! In this frame of mind, he painted *The Outcast*,[1] a work which stands alone in the entire art of the century, and could only originate because inconsolable suffering in the heart of an artist cried out, with elemental power, for expression. Before the locked portal of a Renaissance palace sits a maiden lightly clad. She has followed her own vagrant fancy, and now that the morning has dawned, and she wishes to return to her father's house, the door is locked. Trembling from the frost and sobbing bitterly, she buries her face in her hands, and her body writhes in deepest woe; but all her wailing avails not to open the locked portal.

Botticelli himself, like Tannhäuser, found redemption: it was Savonarola who again opened to him the gate of salvation. The prophet's voice of thunder which frightened others only told him what as a youth he had long ago felt. All his youthful dreams, the most secret emotions of his soul, were expressed in words, and the time of his first romantic attachment seemed to return. Inspired and supported by Savonarola,

[1] In the collection of Prince Pallavincini at Rome.—Ed.

Botticelli's art received a powerful impulse. Forever forgetting Venus, the witch, and with a devotion all the more glowing and stormy because united with repentance, he sank at the feet of the object of his youthful worship, Mary, the mother of God. The three Hours, who in *Primavera* with clasped hands tread a measure, are changed into theological virtues, escorting in joyful dance the triumphant chariot of the church. Not until this work is the whole power of the master revealed. Savonarola had touched his lips and the timid, hesitating, dreamy Botticelli had himself become a prophet, who with glowing enthusiasm and loud pathos preached the return to asceticism and to the Christian doctrine of salvation. No longer do his figures glance at us with beseeching sadness, but they seem to exhort and to warm.

The difference between his late and his earlier Madonnas consists in the much greater emphasis upon the gloomy and solemn character of the devotional picture. As he changed the youthful, deeply reflective mother of God into a thoughtful sibyl to whose prophetic glance the future lies revealed, so his angels became deeply earnest, sad and tired beings, staring with wide-open eyes as if into an abyss. Sometimes Mary, as if she had suddenly awakened from an awful dream, embraces the child with a stormy fervour; or she passes by absorbed in thought like a somnambulist, mechanically holding the Christ-child, who with equal sadness bends over to John. As the mother is con-

vulsed by a silent woe, so the child feels the whole weight of an unavoidable destiny resting upon him. To Savonarola's influence also is to be attributed the emphasis which in other altar-pieces he places upon the maidenly, modest character of the Virgin. The most costly objects, glittering stuffs, gleaming marble and grey granite are heaped up; and men in all the pomp of earthly splendour have assembled as a guard of honour around the imposing throne. But upon this throne, barefooted and in the black garb of a matron, there sits a pale, timid, thoughtful maiden, who does not understand the homage paid her. Only Burne-Jones in his *King Cophetua* has with equal refinement depicted a similar contrast.

But Botticelli now struck even louder and more penetrating tones. While he had formerly only lived in gentle dreams, he struck in his last works the whole scale of human emotion; from the joyful dithyrambs of the angels, who in the *Coronation of the Virgin* dance, fly, flutter, and rush through the air, singing the praises of the Almighty and strewing flowers down upon the earth, to the mournful pathos in his picture of the *Entombment of Christ.*[1] The sermon which Savonarola preached on Good Friday, 1494, to the breathless, tearful people is echoed in the gloomy, sobbing pathos of Botticelli's works. One sees women sink into unconsciousness, dying of insane anguish, and men writhe with loud moaning. The painter of the *Venus*

[1] Both of these paintings are in the Florentine Academy.

has become the Jeremiah of the Renaissance. Instead of whispering, he thunders with the fanaticism of the convert; he struggles as if defending a great treasure, labours with such haste as though he feared that he would not be able to express what he had to say. More than two thirds of his work originated in these years of theocratic rule.

Then almost nothing more. The martyrdom of Savonarola was the funeral of Botticelli's art. As the great figure of the prophet had held him above water, the fall of his hero robbed him of his power. After he had celebrated the memory of the martyr in the *Adoration of the Kings* (London), he laid down the brush, hardly fifty years old, but a broken man. The illustrations of Dante are almost the only evidence of his existence during the last decade of his life. "Being whimsical and eccentric," relates Vasari, "he occupied himself with commenting on a certain part of Dante, illustrating the *Inferno*, and executing prints, over which he wasted much time, and, neglecting his proper occupation, he did not work, and thereby caused infinite disorder in his affairs." In other words, the mediæval romanticist took refuge in his true spiritual home. In the mystic transcendental poetry of Dante, the great genius of the middle age, he sought to find a resting place for his afflicted soul. He buried himself in remote ideological speculations, in order to forget as much as possible the impious present, and sought to express in the language of art things which mock

at artistic reproductions; hoping to find in the mighty epic poem of the future world the quiet repose which he so entreatingly and hopelessly sought. But this work, too, he threw aside, discouraged. Brooding and devoted only to his dreams, lonely and lost in meditation, he lived on. Misery and poverty befell him. He had to walk about on crutches and would have died of starvation had not the Medici occasionally remembered him.[1]

IV. Filippino Lippi

Although the lives of the remaining painters were not changed into a tragedy, as were those of Piero di Cosimo and Botticelli, they also were unable to escape from the influence of the great Dominican. Externally the difference appeared in the completely changed subject of painting. In place of the genre paintings of the Madonna the devotional picture again appeared. The Madonna is majestically enthroned, no longer a richly dressed Florentine woman with coquettish little cap, but

[1] Vasari's story of Botticelli's poverty and misery in old age, upon which the present account is based, is not confirmed by documentary evidence. In 1491, under Medicean rule, Botticelli, associated with Ghirlandajo, was in charge of the mosaic work of the Cathedral and competed in the plans for the façade. According to the income-tax of 1498 he possessed a villa and vineyards outside of the gates of San Frediano; and in 1503 he was one of the commissioners consulted in regard to a location for Michelangelo's *David*. In 1510 his father was sufficiently wealthy to purchase a family vault in the church of Ognissanti, where Sandro lies buried.

the *donna umile* whom Savonarola had described, the poor hand-maiden of the Lord, her face transfigured with silent sadness and a matron's veil drawn over her head. Angels draw back a curtain or press forward in happy enthusiasm; with coquettish glance the saints gaze upward; the Christ-child no longer plays, but gives the blessing, and little St. John approaches him with a cross in his hand. As in the *trecento*, flowers and music are used to heighten the effect. The *Adoration of the Kings* and the *Sufferings of the Redeemer*, His *Crucifixion*, *Deposition*, and *Entombment*, of which Savonarola had so often spoken, also occupy the artist. The usual custom of representing Christ as beardless more frequently than was formerly done may be due to the fact that in the eyes of the artists, Savonarola himself seemed the Saviour. Visions, also, especially Mary appearing to various saints, or Christ to His mother or Magdalen, became as popular as in the times of the Counter-reformation. While the realist wished to know nothing of supernatural things, the miracle, "Faith's dearest child," again enters into art. Only the manner in which the themes are treated differs in accordance with the temperament of the individual artist.

Lorenzo di Credi followed the course of events in thoughtful silence. As his *Annunciation* in the Uffizi and his *Adoration of the Shepherds* in the Academy show, he was a very lovable master, who acquired a good colour sense and a delicate feeling for landscape

in the workshop of Verrocchio and from Goes's altar-piece. Then he also sacrificed to the gods of Greece and painted that *Venus* of the Uffizi, a work of Botticelli translated into Cranach. At the *auto da fé* of vanities on Carnival Tuesday in 1497, he as a modest, quiet man, would have found it discourteous not to have taken part; so with bold determination he threw all of his life studies into the flames, and began to paint the many mild and contemplative pictures which represent him in all the galleries. In the midst of that temperamental, nervous race, Credi is the only one who had no nerves: a kind of Gerard Dou, who was lost in the stormy time. He prepared his own colours, and with a Dutch sense of cleanliness he was careful that no bit of dust dimmed the enamel-like smoothness of his paintings. His landscapes must be as clean as the room in which he labours: the sod well-trimmed, the gravel paths without weeds, the brook sparkling, and the sheep fresh-washed.

He never exercises his intellect, but with incredible persistence continues to repeat all his life the same scenes. The *Adoration of the Christ-child* especially he treated in endless repetitions with a mild and friendly charm, too soft to be called melancholy, and with a childish, somewhat stupid piety, too phlegmatic to rise to passion. Even when, after Savonarola's fall, taste again turned to other subjects, Credi did not permit his repose to be disturbed. He became a restorer of paintings, and finally bought himself a place in a

hospital for old men, where, much esteemed by his fellow-citizens, he ended his days in contemplative peace.

A similar nature, only much more delicate and tired, was Rafaellino del Garbo. With him everything fades into the perfume of flowers and music of mandolins. His circular painting of the Madonna at Berlin, in particular, has a fragrant, almost hypnotic effect. To the music of viols and flutes, angels have rocked the Christ-child to sleep; a dreamy silence rests over the earth, and the last sounds of the angel's viol, dying quietly away, vibrate through the air; while the other angel, who has ceased playing the flute, gazes upon Mary as if lost in a dream.

Even more interesting is the attitude which Filippino Lippi, a thorough child of the world, takes towards the new events. It is a piquant coincidence that this son of the jolly monk and the former nun, the son of that light-hearted sensual period which made a harem of the convent, was called to become the painter of rigid Dominicanism. And even more piquant is the clever and frivolous manner with which he dedicated his fascinating talent to the service of ideals quite indifferent to him.

To attempt to explain Filippino Lippi's style would be love's labour lost. Whenever he so desires, he can imitate others to the point of illusion. At first he followed his teacher Botticelli, as whose double he appears in his youthful works. The wonderful picture

of the *Virgin Appearing to St. Bernard,* which he painted for the Badia in 1480, might have been signed Botticelli. Like an aristocratic lady she gently approaches the saint, who almost lets his pen fall in astonishment when with her tender hand she touches his book. The altar-piece of the Virgin Mary in the Uffizi and another in Santo Spirito are further works reminding in their quiet melancholy of Botticelli. He is equally delicate when, following Botticelli, he paints fantastic, allegorical pictures, like the *Allegory of Music* in Berlin, over which a dreamy far-away feeling broods.

Then came an abrupt change of scene, transforming Botticelli's double to Masaccio's. He was twenty-seven years of age when he received the commission to complete Masaccio's cycle of frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel. The subjects were the *Visit of Paul to Peter;* the *Release of Peter from Prison; Peter and Paul before the Proconsul;* the *Crucifixion of Peter,* and the incomplete subject of the *Raising of the King's Son.* Truly, a style could not be imitated in a more virtuose fashion. During the sixty years intervening between Masaccio and Filippino Lippi a very different nervous life had come into the world. Nevertheless, Filippino Lippi wears the mask of the older master with the same self-possession with which he had formerly worn Botticelli's. The solemn monumental style of Masaccio seems quite as natural to him as the emotional art of Botticelli.

As a skilful prestidigitator he quickly adapted himself to the style of the age of Savonarola, and thus at the close of the fifteenth century the Baroque style appears; like causes producing like effects. Under the impression of the sermons of Savonarola emotions had been raised to the fever pitch. The quiet objectivity of the old masters no longer sufficed; agitation and pathos were demanded; pictures which spoke in the same words of thunder which rolled from Savonarola's lips. But the entirely modern trend of his talent, his versatility and adaptability, enabled Filippino at once to satisfy these demands. As he had formerly imitated Botticelli and then Masaccio, he now adopted the religious style, with the versatile talent and the unbelieving indifference of a child of the world. He merely plays the tragedy which Botticelli lived. Just because he was not a convinced but only a disguised apostle, there enters into his art that affected theatrical quality adopted for the same reason by the Baroque in the seventeenth century.

The very theme of the frescoes which in 1493 he painted for the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome, shows that the spirit of Dominicanism had again entered as a power into the development of art. While the masters before Savanarola had treated simple and narrative themes from the legend of the saint, Filippino depicts an *Apotheosis of St. Thomas Aquinas*. In the pictures the same dogmatism prevails which a hundred years before had been the programme

of the Dominican paintings by Traini and the frescoes of the Spanish Chapel. Learned inscriptions, allegorical figures, significant references to the heretics refuted by the Saint—things with which the realism of the *quattrocento* had broken—are taken up anew. And as he had in his subject attached himself to the propagandist painting of the *trecento*, he also by his style paves the way for the art of the Jesuits. The simple, sustained narrative of Masaccio is followed by theatrical pathos. All the figures gesticulate and screw themselves into sanctimonious grimaces; the draperies are arranged in puffed and restless folds; and fluttering bands, sashes, and veils complete the Baroque effect. The architecture plays a suitable accompaniment to the melody of the figures. In place of the delicacy of the *quattrocento*, wildly exaggerated and fantastic forms appear.

Before his last cycle, the frescoes of Santa Maria Novella in Florence (1498–1512) one stands speechless as before an anachronism. Here also the theme of the painting, *St. Philip Exorcising the Demon*, is characteristic of the changed views. On a complicated pedestal stands Mars swinging a torch; while from a hole beneath the monument the demon crawls forth whom the apostle with a mighty gesture exorcises. Round about surges an excited, nervous crowd. In place of the quiet spectators of Ghirlandajo's paintings, Filippino introduces actors, each one of whom plays a rôle, explaining his theatrical pathos with

corresponding gestures. Everything in this astonishing picture is movement and excitement. Even the caryatids of the triumphal arch, the victories, hermæ and trophies, stretch themselves and grin; the gables rear and writhe, and all technical laws are broken. Borromini thus appears in art a hundred years before his birth. The *non plus ultra*, however, is the ceiling-decorations; angels fly about with the same *aplomb* that Correggio afterwards achieved. Noah resembles an ancient river god, while Abraham and Jacob reveal such breadth of treatment and such boldness in draperies and movement, and are encircled by such impossible bands and folds that one can do nothing but gaze in silent astonishment.

The same is true of his later panel-paintings. The heavy puffed draperies which encircle his Madonna are the same which Bernini gave his angels a hundred and fifty years later. In his last work, the *Deposition from the Cross*, in the Florentine Academy, the influence of Savonarola is shown in the reversion to the golden backgrounds of the middle age, in the simple drapery, the desolate Golgotha with its skull, and the gloomy, mournful colour. More personally characteristic of Filippino are the Baroque angels, with draperies streaming in the clouds, and the fluttering sashes and bands which they wind about the goblet. The fifteenth and seventeenth centuries clasp hands. Had he died a generation later, instead of in 1504, he would be celebrated as the founder of the Baroque style.

V. The Secular Religious Masters

Savonarola's influence was not confined to Florence alone, but throughout all Italy it guided art back into religious channels. It is certain that he did not alone create the religious reaction which at that time swept over Europe; for in him an explosion found vent, the materials for which were everywhere present. He was the speaking-tube of his time, proclaiming with loud voice what others had felt in silence. It was just for this reason that with his appearance a new section of the history of art begins.

At the close of the fifteenth century a similar feeling must have pervaded the earth to that experienced in the years when the triumphs of Courbet's realism and Manet's impressionism were succeeded by the enthusiasm for Rossetti and Moreau, and the reaction of the Rosicrucians began. Realism was the product of a positive and worldly epoch which expressed itself in epic, never in lyric strains. A clear eye was considered sufficient, and feeling could be dispensed with. Passionless and in the same attitude of science to nature, painting wished to conquer by means of the eye alone. Nature and the antique were the two powers which inspired their activity. Only one thing had been forgotten: Christianity. They knew nothing more of that longing for the future world which at the beginning of the century still pulsated in all hearts.

Then there came, as in the nineteenth century, the moment when the long-suppressed inner life asserted itself, and feeling revolted against science. Not in Florence alone, but in all countries the narrators and investigators, whose eye was fixed clearly upon the objective world, were confronted by the lyricists and the dreamers, for whom art was only a means of expressing the inner life. The realists were followed by the romanticists, who, tired of the decades of unbelieving investigators, longed for the fervent faith and the unselfish love which the middle age had professed.

True, there were still individuals who decorated the churches and palaces with narratives of the news of the day. During his sojourn in Constantinople, Gentile Bellini had ample opportunity to see many things that were ethnographically interesting, which he recorded in his sketch book; and after his return to his native city he illustrated in the same way the manners and usages of Venice. Festal processions approach; richly decked Venetians, dignified senators, and browned sons of the Orient in strange gaudy costumes move upon the pavement of the Piazzetta. The whole of Venice of the *quattrocento*, with its streets, squares, churches, and palaces; with the charming colour of the costumes of its inhabitants, collected from the Orient and the Occident, is preserved in his paintings with the faithfulness of a document and with the exactitude of a photographic apparatus. Of course it is at bottom immaterial who takes such photographical representations, which do

not rise above the level of painted illustrations. What was an actual achievement in Pisanello's time was no longer one at the close of the century.

Gentile's counterpart in Umbria was Pinturicchio, who left an amazing number of frescoes in Rome, Spello and Siena—paintings which may be described with the same words as those of Benozzi Gozzoli. Like the latter he is a merry narrator, who with great skill devotes himself to wordy descriptions of festal scenes and with great ease invents rich Renaissance buildings. Resplendent costumes, gaudy carpets before the throne, stately halls, and proud façades give his pictures a joyous, festal imprint. But as Gozzoli had achieved this effect as early as 1460, it was no achievement to repeat the performance in 1500, the less so as Pinturicchio does not even excel his predecessor in technique. With the childishness of a miniature painter he places red, green, and blue side by side, as if the great technicians in colour had never existed. He never succeeds in seizing the dramatic elements of a scene, in connecting the figures with each other, or in bringing unity into the action. Nor does he understand how to arrange the figures in perspective, but places those of the background upon the heads of those in front. He seems to be a primitive who has survived in the sixteenth century. His position as the court painter of that Borgia who was instrumental in burning Savonarola shows how distant he stood from the great ideals of the age. For in the case of Pinturicchio it

could hardly be maintained that his was a conscious reversion to mediæval miniature painting.

His works, therefore, as well as Gentile Bellini's merely confirm the passing away of realism. The very scene of their activity is characteristic. Gentile laboured in Venice, which was always decades behind the artistic development of the rest of Italy; and while Pinturicchio succeeded in playing an important rôle in Perugia, Orvieto, Spello, Siena, and even in Rome, whose artistic activity had lagged behind, he never dared attempt Florence. In other words, whereas about the middle of the century the spirit of realism prevailed in all progressive cities, and religious art quietly survived chiefly in the country, the relation now is reversed. Precisely in the most modern city of Italy, in Florence, which had done the longest and most complete homage to realism, the signal for a complete change was earliest and most loudly sounded. After that, even in the remainder of Italy, the need for worldly pictures was supplied by illustrators of the second rank. The realists are no longer factors in the historical development, but stragglers who blessed unprogressive cities and small villages with doubtful artistic productions.

As with the contemporary historical painting and the presentation, also, of New Testament subjects in modern costume so it is all over with the antique. Although in the preceding epoch Padua had been the strong citadel of Hellenism, now even the heathen Mantegna

flees as a repentant Christian to the foot of the cross. Savonarola had preached in the cities of northern Italy as well as in Florence. Did Mantegna hear him, or did the waves of the new religious revival which the Dominican had inspired indirectly reach him? Strange incidents are related of his last years. He, the Roman, the hard, implacable spirit, had a chapel built, in which, as a hermit, he daily practised contemplation. An antique bust of Faustina, the gem of his collection, which he had guarded as a precious treasure, he offered for sale to the Marchioness of Mantua, and his last works offer further proof of the great change in his spirit.

As in the case of Botticelli, the transition first reveals itself in his preference of allegorical to antique subjects. Especially, the picture he painted for Isabella d' Este, showing *Wisdom Expelling the Vices*, is a strange pendant to Botticelli's *Calumny of Apelles*. The whole is pervaded by a disagreeable torn and shattered feeling; and in the air, quite out of connection with the principal theme, a heavenly group appears. Finally, he refused altogether to work further upon the cycle, and his activity ceased in Christian representations of quite a different spirit from those he had painted during his heathen period.

Then he had painted Sebastian bound to an antique ruin, professing himself a Hellene in the Greek inscription, and had in a line engraving represented him as a Greek *ephebos* dying in his beauty. In the painting

of the Franchetti collection in Venice, the beautiful youth has become an emaciated man, a suffering mortal whose features are furrowed by painful woe. "Nil nisi divinum stabile est, cetera fumus," the inscription reads. Formerly in painting Madonnas and Entombments, the emotional content of the theme was indifferent to him. He was attracted by the bronze-like beauty of sinewy bodies, the splendour of marble thrones and fruit garlands, and the stony appearance of the landscape. In the works which sound the last chord of his activity, the spirit of Christianity begins to animate the rigid stony objects. The clear-headed and carefully-weighing Mantegna becomes a lyricist and a wailing prophet. Sometimes his figures have a mild, thoughtful, and melancholy expression; at others a passionate pathos, formerly confined within the steel corslet of Grecian rules of style, breaks forth with abrupt directness. The Christ-child is sad, almost weeping, and Mary, with foreboding of future suffering, thoughtfully bows her head. The altar-piece of the National Gallery in London and the *Madonna della Victoria* of the Louvre show this change with especial clearness. The tones of the organ resound, festal niches of foliage arise; saints, no longer the sullen, reticent bronze beings of his earlier days, but fair-haired and ecstatic gather around the throne. The Christ-child, who in the altar-pieces of San Zeno in Verona sang so joyfully with the angels, now, solemn and shrinking, gives a melancholy blessing. Mary,

formerly rigid and majestic, is now a pale and languishing maiden staring dreamily and sadly into vacancy, clothed as humbly as a beggar, the *donna umile* of Botticelli.

At the same time that the latter completed his grief-convulsed *Entombment*, Mantegna painted his. His feet in the foreground, the corpse of Christ appears in boldest foreshortening—a revival of Mantegna's love of perspective. But who thinks of perspective in the presence of this sunken body, with the hands cramped together; of these old women whose wrinkled faces are contorted in nameless woe? From the contemporary line engraving of the same subject, the cry of despair sounds even wilder. In raving grief Magdalen bends over the corpse; Mary sinks into unconsciousness, and, loudly as a maniac, John cries his agony to heaven. The cold and reticent, classically severe Mantegna has through Savonarola become a Rogier van der Weyden. "Humani generis redemptori" is inscribed in large letters upon the sarcophagus. To the same Saviour of mankind Mantegna's last line engraving is dedicated. Christ, arisen from the grave and holding the banner of victory, stands blessing between Sts. Andrew and Longinus. The former, holding the cross in quiet confidence, is the saint for whom the artist is named; and the Roman warrior bowing his head so deeply, who, timid as a prodigal son, approaches the Saviour with folded hands, is Mantegna himself, the man of the Renaissance seek-

ing peace in the faith of Christ. In this print the tragedy of a life is summarised — the tragedy of the *quattrocento*.

VII. Crivelli

Although at the beginning of the fifteenth century the middle age quietly passed away, its close witnessed a subtle and refined revival of all the mediæval styles. Instead of going forward the artists looked backwards. "Le moyen-âge énorme et délicat" is their spiritual home.

The reactionary tendencies are especially evident in Venice. The new religious current of the epoch enabled its painters not only to hold fast with conservative rigidity to the ideals of the early *quattrocento*, but once more to invoke the gloomy majesty of the Byzantine style. Although he lived until 1499, Bartolommeo Vivarini remains, in his austerity, a Paduan of the days of Squarcione. Rigid and in separate panels, as in Squarcione's altar, his figures stand before us. The elevated marble thrones are adorned with statuettes of angels, stone ornaments, and with garlands of fruits and flowers. The figures of the saints are severe and ascetic, their features careworn or sullen, and their mighty brows are ploughed with deep furrows. The colour is gloomy and threatening, and the white, black, and yellow draperies gleam harshly from the golden background.

Carlo Crivelli does not appear to belong to the

fourteenth century at all, but to the pre-Giottesque period of Cimabue. In Huysmans's *À rebours* there is a passage describing how Des Esseintes had the shell of a tortoise varnished with a gold glaze and set with rare and precious stones,—after which he placed it upon an oriental carpet and rejoiced in the glittering colour-effect. Carlo Crivelli's paintings resemble this gilded tortoise: in their sparkling metallic splendour and icy reptilian coldness, they have at the same time an offensive and delicate, a revolting and attractive effect. Like the mosaicists of the middle age, he could not conceive a painting without rich and glittering ornaments, applied (especially in the case of keys and crowns) in the heavy style of a relief. Like them his eyes were entranced with the sheen of fabrics, the sparkle of precious stones, and a quite barbaric material splendour. His saints wear the triple papal crown, their clothes are set with precious stones, and an amazing wealth of ornament adorns the frames. But he was not satisfied with keeping Grecian stoles, mass-vestments of gold fabric, and brocaded choir mantles, and setting the crosiers of his saints with transparent pearls of a glassy, piercing splendour. Even where ornaments do not belong, upon the sarcophagus of Christ, for example, emeralds, rubies, topazes and gleaming amethysts sparkle, here a bluish-red, there sea-green in their chilling splendour. He loved the glittering products of the goldsmith's art, the magic of slender goblets and pyxes; monstrances

of gilded copper in the Byzantine style; precious altar tables with engraved ornaments, and old quarto volumes clasped in silver. Even the gay plumage of birds must assist to heighten the splendour of his paintings, especially of peacocks, with tails gleaming in gold, green, blue, and silver.

Quite as mediæval as this barbaric splendour of colour is the effect of his archaic drawing. The position of his Madonnas is as rigid as those of Cimabue; the colour of their faces is pale and corpse-like; their emaciated arms are bare to the elbow, and small and withered hands stretch out from their sleeves. Although in other altar-pieces of the day the donors are depicted equal in size to the saints and kneel in the midst of the chief painting, Crivelli reverted to the mediæval custom of introducing them as pygmies quite outside of the composition.

Alongside of these Byzantine traits are Paduan and Umbrian tendencies. In the sweetness which he sometimes imparts to his Madonnas, he reminds us of Gentile da Fabriano; he comes in contact with the mystics of the *trecento* when he distinguishes the Christ-child as a fisher of men by placing a hook in his hand. Even a Netherlandish trait is thought to be observed in his manner of grouping pots and candlesticks, plates and glasses, carpets and cushions, bottles and vases as still life. His severe types of children and careworn old women are quite Paduan, reminding us of Schiavone and Zoppo; as are also the heavy garlands hanging over

MADONNA WITH SAINTS
Berlin Gallery

the rich marble throne, and the large peaches and stiff flowers scattered upon the ground. Quite Paduan is the pathos which pervades his presentation of the *Pietà*. Howling Megæras prostrate themselves over the corpse, a half-decayed, mouldering body, the skin of which hangs like leather from the ribs; great tear-drops run down the cheeks of the angels, and a convulsive pain distorts the figures and the features of the Redeemer.

But it is precisely in such paintings, where he weeps pathetically, that his cruel coldness is the more evident. Although he has sounded the entire gamut of emotion, from howling pain to affected ecstasy, the effect of his art is cold as ice. Even though his saints distort their lips with morbid gracefulness or in grotesque pain and weep hot tears, his works retain the petrified jewel-like effect of the mosaic style. Rigidly as exhumed corpses the men stare at us; cold and clear is the glance of the women, with their steel-blue, faience-like eyes. The very pottery which he heaps about, and the ugly, pale, confused landscape, over which such a strange greenish light shines, strengthen the cold, corpse-like effect. Only in his refinement of colour, in the subtle manner in which he takes up ancient notes and combines them to new chords, and in the tortuous daintiness with which his women stretch out their nervous hands and crook their spider-like fingers, can we recognise the artist of the *quattrocento*, for whom this archaic style is not natural, but an

artificial one chosen with conscious epicureanism.

We can also understand why just Crivelli was called to effect this strange revival of the middle age. For he was an aristocratic gentleman, and when in 1490 King Ferdinand of Naples raised him to the dignity of knighthood, he seems to have regarded this distinction as the most important event of his life. From now on he represented St. Sebastian as a knight, and always signs himself *eques*. If he lived to-day he would belong not to the Liberal but to the extreme Conservative party. The most reactionary of all aristocratic Venice he conceived the idea of again proclaiming, at least in the country, the gospel of the mighty, unshaken mediæval church—in all those little towns like Massa, Ripatransone, Ascoli, Camerino, and Fermo, whither neither worldliness nor ecclesiastical struggles had penetrated. Considering also that his belief was not a sincere one and that the distinguished Crivelli, himself a sort of Des Esseintes, only regarded Byzantine art as a source of æsthetic pleasure, and the old ecclesiastical ideals as so much perfumed golden tinsel—the character of his painting is evident. It is an artificial and affected art, playing in a cold-blooded manner with all the emotions of the heart; uniting childishness with mouldy decay, archaic severity with putrid decadence. This perversity also explains why our own time has made a favorite of Crivelli. As latter-day beings burdened with a long past, for whom the art of our predecessors signifies æsthetic nature,

we love Crivelli, because the blue blood of the ancient and cultivated past flows through his veins; because, as a conscious abstracter of the quintessence of things, he chose the most dainty and the most precious in the past to form his bizarre style. We admire, because, in the midst of the world which had grown quite different, he resurrected such cruel visions and such fantastic apotheoses of a bygone time, and invoked in such an amazing manner the splendour of the middle age in its barbaric glory. We love him as we love Gustave Moreau, because his dainty, aristocratic and mannered style is the acme of refinement; and because his art is unknown to the masses for the very reason that it preserved these haughty and noble qualities.

VIII. Perugino

An apparition like Crivelli was only possible in Byzantine Venice, whose aristocratic population had never loved a living art, but had preferred to collect only ancient and sparkling things, medals and cameos, mosaics, filigree work, and ivory. The following artist has the same relation to Crivelli as the Siennese, as Fiesole and Lochner, to the mosaic painters. As in Venice the ancient Byzantine style, so in Umbria the spirit of Francis of Assisi was revived anew. It is customary to deduce the mystic and dreamy traits of Umbrian art from the character of the country. While in a city like Florence a worldly and realistic art necessarily developed, only a lyric and elegiac art was

possible in the isolated valleys of Umbria, where poor people, silently trusting in God, lived a contemplative life. But however convincing this may appear, styles of painting can only result from the prevailing spiritual factors of the epoch. At the same time that Umbria possessed a mystic painter in Gentile da Fabriano, Florence saw hers in Fiesole. At the same time that the great investigators, Uccello, Castagno and Pollajuolo, labored in Florence, Umbria produced the greatest of all investigators, Piero della Francesca, and later Melozzo and Signorelli. Among other Umbrians Benedetto Bonfigli, Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and Niccolô di Liberatore are still confirmed realists, knowing nothing of that emotional blessedness and sentimental ecstasy which came into Umbrian art through Perugino.

The latter, however, received his inspiration not in Umbria but in Florence. "Think not that Mary at the death of her Son went screaming through the streets, tearing her hair and acting like one possessed. She followed her Son with meekness and great humility. She shed tears, indeed, but externally she did not appear sad—rather at the same time sad and joyful. Thus also she stood under the cross, sad and joyful at the same time and quite lost in contemplation of the secret of the great goodness of God." These words of Savaronola were a revelation to Perugino: a joyful sadness, smiles among tears, is the prevailing sentiment of all of his pictures. Umbria added only

the delicate charm of its landscape; the melancholy effect of a pale, delicate green, and the spare, quivering trees of spring, shivering and longingly stretching out their branches towards the sunlight.

In this dreamy melancholy Perugino is one of the most enchanting masters of the *quattrocento*. The reproach has been brought against him that his art was not in harmony with his character; that the painter of such mystic and supernatural work was a clear-headed and calculating business man, who repeated the joyful ecstasy of his saints in cold routine, merely to please the public. His one-sideness has also been dwelt upon; and it has been maintained that the conception of powerful and virile characters, as well as the lifelike representation of energetic action, was denied him; that instead of connecting his figures, he places them side by side, often so symmetrically that the left half of the painting corresponds with the right; and that, instead of differentiating them with reference to their character, he made all of them either boyish pages or meek and mild old men.

Yet all of these peculiarities resulted as a logical consequence of the end he sought to attain. The contemplative and lyric character of his saints and the impression of sustained repose and archaic sublimity which he wished to create could only be attained by a composition which did not permit its quiet repose to be disturbed by hasty movement or changeful contrasts. For this reason he avoids variety in position; the

figures either stand straddling or in affected daintiness upon the toes. The symmetrical arrangement of his paintings may also have been determined by the point of view that this arrangement best expressed the "divinity in the construction of nature"—in accordance with the saying of St. Augustine: "Where order exists, there is beauty, and all order comes from God." The feminine proclivities of his art he has in common with all mystics, the Siennese as well as the Cologne painters. Women (and also girlish youths and weary old men) are better suited to be bearers of the soft sentiment which he alone interprets.

Perugino's adoption of Savonarola's idea of joyful sadness is perhaps a specifically Umbrian trait. Whereas in the works of Botticelli and Mantegna the sentiment, whether it be abrupt pathos or suffering despair, is that of a wild struggle, in the sweet, soulful figures of Perugino, smiling so sadly or dreaming so mournfully, the mild piety and childish peace of soul of Francis of Assisi still appears. In a storm-convulsed time which usually played *fortissimo*, he was the first to prescribe *dolce*, *adagio*, and *mezza voce* for his compositions, and to seek out the softer and finer emotions instead of great convulsions. It is just this absence of movement and discreet moderation, this delight in dreaming and this preference for tender and weary feelings, which make him so related to our own time. Although he lived more in Florence, the great city, than in little Perugia, his art resembles a quiet, secluded

mountain tarn, reflecting the entire heaven in its clear depths.

What the artist of the Medicean age saw in the antique, Perugino found in allegory. When Isabella d' Este commissioned him to paint a picture for her study, he did not choose a heathen subject like Mantegna's *Parnassus*, but depicted the *Victory of Chastity over Love* (now in the Louvre). In like manner the cycle of frescoes painted in 1499–1500, for the court-room of the money-changers in Perugia, is characteristic of the change which had come over art since Savonarola's appearance. Although upon the ceiling the deities of the firmament move to and fro, and Greek and Roman heroes are portrayed upon the walls, the theme is not antique, but rather a reversion, under the influence of the spirit of the time, to the allegoric subjects popular in the *trecento*. As in the Dominican paintings of the Spanish Chapel, *Wisdom*, *Justice*, *Fortitude*, and *Temperance* are personified by female figures to which those of men famed for these virtues are added by way of commentary.

All of his remaining paintings are dedicated to the Mother of God, and however different the themes the sentiment is always the same, a joyful sadness, smiles amidst tears. For the mild ecstasy of his figures he also found suitable soft colours, and was one of the first to discover the secret threads which bind the sentiment of the landscape with the human soul. With the Child upon her arm Mary usually sits dreaming,

her eyes fixed upon a mysterious horizon; or she kneels before the new-born infant, happy and yet sad, as if her joy were subdued by the presentiment of a future fate; or else a melancholy smile spreads over her features when the music of heavenly harps sounds. A wonderful effect is attained by the pious, refined, and yet simple manner in which he depicts the *Vision of St. Bernard*. In a graceful hall of columns opening into a view upon an Umbrian mountain landscape, the saint sits at his desk gazing upon the incarnation of the Blessed One who had just occupied his thoughts. Inaudibly, with maidenly timidity she approaches and then speaks to him, accompanied by two dove-eyed angels. Bernard is not frightened, makes no motion, and does not rise from his seat, but raises his hand as if to welcome a long-expected visitor, and looks joyfully upon the heavenly vision.

In another cycle of frescoes, painted in 1492–96 in the church of Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi, Florence, he depicts the *Crucifixion* and the events following. The wall is separated by three arches, in the middle one of which stands, in the silent desolate landscape, the cross with the Saviour. He is portrayed as very youthful, without a beard, and disfigured by no traces of suffering. The Magdalen is praying, Mary looks reflectively before her, and no cry or gesture of pain disturbs the holy quiet; a weary peace has spread over the landscape. With equal repose, without any dramatic excitement, the *Entombment* is portrayed.

THE CRUCIFIXION

Fresco, S. M. Maddalena dei Pazzi, Florence

Instead of writhing bodies convulsed with pain, such as Botticelli and Mantegna had painted, Perugino only gives a sorrowful scene of parting, a silent worship of souls. Mary, whom Botticelli has represented as sinking into unconsciousness, bends over the dead man as if she wished to speak apart with him; the other participants stand murmuring silent prayers and lost in painful contemplation. As little as he here knows wild pathos did he depict stormy joy in the *Ascension.* With a tired inclination of the head, the apostles, arranged in a straight line, look up to heaven, where, borne by the heads of seraphs, the Risen One hovers, while upon the cloudlets angels make music. The delicately poised position, the childishly conceived cloudlets, and the symmetrical arrangement—all these things betray how consciously Perugino imitates the archaic in order to attain an unreal, *trecento* effect.

The note which he struck was so much in the spirit of the times, and his paintings in their bitter-sweet sentimentality had such a tormenting and fascinating effect, that others soon tuned their instruments to the same key. Francesco Francia in Bologna, choosing the same subjects, paints Madonnas, Holy Families, the Adoration of the Christ-child, and Holy Conversations. As with Perugino, Mary wears the matron's veil over her head; like the Umbrian master he is more at home in painting women than men; only that he has a similar relation to Perugino that Lorenzo di Credi had to

Botticelli. He is harsher, less temperamental and more fleshly, and cannot rise to the sweet ecstasy and divine languor of Perugino. As the figures themselves are fuller, more healthful and powerful, so the colour is more quiet and material, but less warm and fragrant. The trembling melancholy of Perugino is replaced by a woful meekness, his vibrating nervousness by phlegmatic calm. Like Credi he was a quiet, lovable man, who attracted numerous pupils to his atelier. Timoteo Viti, Raphael's first master, a charming and delicate artist, whose works are characterised by quiet joyfulness and a soft dreaminess, is especially indebted to him. Lorenzo Costa, also, who at first painted in the harsh manner of the Ferrarese, acquired his later style, which was full of sentiment and gracefully artificial, from his association with Francia. In his paintings meek men and modest women who only know soft feelings and mild gestures lead an æsthetic life in the midst of dainty landscapes. Rather hovering than walking, and with modestly sunken head, they move about with a mannered grace —quite a different race from the powerful and angular mortals which he once painted from Tura's pictures.

Quite otherwise the religious sentiment of Milan is differentiated. Vincenzo Foppa, who is considered the founder of old Milanese art, can hardly be recognised as a pupil of Mantegna. Although he decorated a chapel in the church of Sant' Eustorgio in accordance

with the principles of Mantegna's ceiling-decoration, the effect here, as well as in the *Marytrdom of Sebastian*, is not one of Paduan severity but of Umbrian softness. As regards Bernardo Zenale, the artist next following him, nothing can at present be said, because the Madonna in the Brera formerly considered his principal work was probably painted by Boltraffio. Although it is certainly a phrase to call Ambrogio Borgognone a North Italian Fiesole, there is one point of resemblance. Like Fiesole, Borgognone lived for a long time in a convent, the Certosa of Pavia. This sentiment of the cloister, a breath of peace like the sweep of angels' wings, pervades his paintings. The heads are pale and spiritual, and the colour in its veiled silvery-grey harmonies had the effect of a song played in the high, delicately touched notes of a violin. He appears like a distinguished clergyman of quiet tastes who has fled from the noise of the world to seek quiet contemplation. Indeed, he does not impress one as an Italian. Something of the sincerity of an old German, I might almost say the sentiment of "forget-me-nots," hovers over his modest, lovely works. Think for a moment of the *putti* of the Italian artist, and then look upon the little philistines in night dresses who in Borgognone's *Crucifixion* bewail the Saviour in an old-fashioned, pathetic manner, as if they were repeating school poems, or the two small lads in gold-embroidered caps who appear beside Mary in the Berlin picture. Compare the pictures of Christ by the Italians with

the pale, consumptive man with the spare beard, softly inclining to his mother in Borgognone's picture in San Simpliciano. Even the Gothic character of his composition is significant. It seems as if he had wished to create the impression of an ancient glass painting, the arrangement of which is never triangular, but vertical and straight-lined in accordance with the demands of Gothic architecture. This explains why none of his figures make broad, ample movements, and why the Christ-child sits so bolt upright in Mary's lap; why he always arranged his draperies in vertical parallel folds; why of the flowers he especially loved the slender lily; or why in his picture of the *Crucifixion* the hair of Magdalen falls in such straight lines over her shoulders. It also explains why the rich Renaissance ornament in his hands almost acquires the perpendicular and stiff forms of the *empire*. Of modern artists, Burne-Jones especially has learned much from Borgognone. The extended angels who in his *Days of Creation* hold the celestial sphere with the hieratic solemnity, are lineal descendants of those in Borgognone's *Coronation of the Virgin*. To the German Nazarenes, had they known him, his æsthetic thoughtfulness and pale dreaminess would have been sympathetic. For the knightly princes of fable whom he so loved may be found in the pictures of Steinle. The pale and young deacon in the painting of *Siro* in the Certosa is like Borgognone himself, the type of the art-loving friar who lived in the fantasy of Wackenroder.

VIII. Giovanni Bellini

At Venice Giovanni Bellini conducted art from the Byzantinism of Crivelli and the Paduan rigidity of Bartolommeo Vivarini into the paths of Botticelli and Perugino. At first he had no individual style, but being of a pliant nature he began by following his brother-in-law Mantegna in painting pictures like the *Pietà* of the Brera, which in its harsh pathos and hard drawing might have been the work of a Paduan. After Antonello da Messina had come to Venice, Giovanni was the first, under the influence of this Sicilian Netherlander, to adopt the technique of oil painting. Not until he had absorbed these different elements did he become Bellini. The great religious revival which, since the appearance of Savonarola, had convulsed Italy also helped him to find himself. His great altar-piece in the church of the Frari (1488), with the angel boys making music, and the mighty saints; that of San Pietro in Murano, in which the Doge Barbarigo kneels before the Christ-child; that of San Giobbe, where Mary as if astonished stares into the infinite; and that of 1505 in San Zaccaria, in which an expression of woe transfigures her serious features—these are the world-known pictures of which one always thinks when Bellini's name is mentioned.

It is difficult to express in words the sentiment of these works. Writers on art formerly endeavoured to characterise Venetian painting by contrasting it with the Florentine. They maintained that, while the Flor-

entines loved broad epic narration or dramatic action, a lyric sentiment pervades Venetian painting; they contrasted the plastic severity of the Florentines with the power of Venetian colour to awaken sentiment, and their representations of motherly love with the solemn devotional subjects of the Venetians. But in doing so they compared works of art of two quite different epochs. At the time when Bellini created his mature works, dreamers had succeeded the scholars also on the bank of the Arno, and profane paintings had been followed by devotional. In Florence, also, since the appearance of Goes's altar-piece, no longer form but colour stood in the foreground. Here as there, artists painted Mary as the *donna umile*, a maiden of the people unadorned and with the matron's veil drawn about her head, and the female saints surrounding her aristocratically fine, pale, and richly clad, their carefully dressed hair adorned with pearls. Even the angels making music, cited as characteristics of Venetian painting, are quite as frequent in the works of Perugino and Raffaellino del Garbo. The tender keynote, the musical and emotional elements, are common to all works of the period. What distinguishes Bellini from the rest is purely personal things, delicate nuances, which are to be explained partly by the character of the painter and partly by the surroundings under which he laboured.

When the epicurean age of the Magnifico had passed away, Botticelli, a characteristic son of nervous

Florence, in need of an abrupt contrast, threw himself into the arms of the great Dominican. The feeling with which he did this was similar to that which in Paris, ten years ago, the Rosicrucians, also seized by a *profonde tristesse epicurienne*, proclaimed their spiritual gospel. Weary and no longer able to bear the benumbing odour of Aphrodite's roses, he approached with unsteady tread the throne upon which Mary, crowned with cold white flowers, sits in silence. Just because he had formerly sacrificed to heathen gods, he now battled for the ideals of Christianity with the zeal of the convert. He speaks in shrill and wailing tones, and the lines in his paintings are hard and austere; deathly pale hands are stretched forth. It seemed as if Mary herself could not escape the recollection of the Hill of Venus, as she glances fearfully, like a timid roe, convulsed by a trembling longing for peace.

Perugino, the true son of the Umbrian mountains, passed his youth in high and lonely valleys among a poverty-stricken population. The character of his home is impressed upon his pictures. The landscape which he paints is of a lyric charm; bare trees grow upon delicate swelling ground, and there is something unstable, timid, and imploring in this sickly vegetation. His figures resemble the quivering trees which any gust of wind could fell. He deprives them of everything that smacks of the earth, disrobes them of everything carnal; so that only a shadow, a soul quivering in

delicate, intangible accords, remains. They are sensitive to the finger-tips, spiritual to the point of sickliness, suffering and filled with a mystic longing. For the hill country of Umbria was also the land of mysticism and of second sight, the land of forebodings and of dreams. Here St. Francis dreamed that he had been called to support the Lateran Basilica, and here he saw Christ hovering above him in the figure of a winged seraph. Here Catherine of Siena had her blessed visions, and in every shepherd-maiden a Joan of Arc lived. Perugino's Madonnas also resemble country maidens, pious, dreamy children, who, attending to the flocks and buried in mystic contemplation, suddenly hear the voice of their patron saint.

Giovanni Bellini had never visited the Hill of Venus; for the spirit of Hellenism had never penetrated his oriental corner of the earth. He had never experienced tragedy, but passed an entire life like a long, beautiful and stormless day. Furthermore, when he created his most beautiful pictures he was already an old man. To the little plush cap which he wears in his portrait one would like to add a dressing gown. Everywhere his pictures are lacking in the psychopathic, nervously excited and shattered elements which bring Botticelli so near to our own time. There we find psychic unrest, the cry of a human soul; here eternal peace, a great and simple harmony—the mild, transfigured repose of old age, which no longer knows impetuous action. As we love Botticelli because we find in him a reflex of every-

thing that is morbid, nervous and strained with us, we look up to Bellini as to a noble patriarch who possessed the great and secluded repose which is no longer ours. He differs from Perugino in his solemn grandeur and in the specifically ecclesiastical sentiment that pervades his pictures: country air with Perugino, the perfume of flowers with Botticelli, and incense with Bellini. While the Umbrian's Madonnas possess a bucolic element, Bellini's give the impression of entering into a wide and lofty cathedral. All is quiet about, and the sublime figures of his paintings live their serious and lonely existence in solemn grandeur. This solemn, ecclesiastical effect is not only produced by placing the throne of Mary in the mighty apse of a church; but the figures themselves exhale a sort of magic breath of the divine, and appear themselves to possess the sentiment which comes over one when, with bared head, one passes from noise and daylight into the consecrated dimness and deep silence of the house of God. They neither speak nor make motion; silent as if under the spell of the Holy of Holies, they stand there just as we stand when, lost in dreams, we gaze into the golden night of St. Mark's, and let ourselves be hypnotised by the eyes of the Byzantine saints, solemnly staring down from the golden mosaics; or as when sitting on the Lido we gaze upon the dreamy mirror of the lagoons. For Byzantinism and the lagoons produce the same effect: a solemn Nirvana stupefying the human spirit. This stupor of the

spirit probably best expresses the sentiment of Bellini's paintings.

He never paints action, but only feeling; never motion, but only repose; and these feelings are so suppressed and have entered so little into the sphere of consciousness that his people seem stupefied by opium. His saints never have the languishing ecstasy or the sentimental upward glance of the eyes that Perugino loves; his Madonnas never feel that supernatural longing, that devoted sacrifice with which the Umbrians represent her bending over the Child. With a calmness that is almost indifference Mary holds the Infant upon her arm, as the mother of God, whom the Byzantines painted; or else she is a woman of the people, sitting with her child at the door of the church—having no wants and dreaming, as if stupefied by the glare of the sun and the sultry heat of the noonday. Perugino's Madonnas are shepherdesses, the sisters of Joan of Arc; but over Bellini's hover soft drowsiness and indifferent indolence—the melancholy, tired character of the oriental spirit. There the inward and ecstatic glance of the sibyl, here the uncertain weary glance of the eye gazing dreamily over the lagoons.

The landscape even heightens the dreamy repose of his pictures. For his early pictures, like *Christ Crucified* of the Museo Correr (Venice) or the *Christ* in London, do not give a true idea of his feeling for landscape. As in other respects, he was at that time a Paduan in landscape painting, and like Mantegna laid bare the

skeleton of the earth, taking pleasure in the plastic execution of hard details. It was only gradually that the Venetian element entered his pictures. No longer with the eye of an investigator, but with that of a dreamer he gazed upon nature as the traveller ploughing quietly and noiselessly through the waves in a gondola. No waggon or footfall disturbs him and he sees no details. Bathed in light, like phantoms of the fairy world, palaces and blue mountain chains rise up only to disappear. Bellini was the first to be caressed by the salt air of the lagoons and to realise the dreamy atmosphere which hovers over the coast of Venice. The mountains are bathed in bluish undulating clouds; the valley lies silently in the golden shimmer of the evening red, and the twilight spreads over the silent hills. One is reminded especially of Böcklin's fairy picture in which a slender nymph-like woman, encircled by a flowing white robe and holding a great globe upon her knee, reposes in a boat which, impelled by light winds, is gliding silently away. I know as little what it represents as the thousand others who stand dreamily before it. It seems as if the artist had painted his own life, which, unmoved by storm, also passed away as quietly and silently as a beautiful autumn day. Now that the evening has come, the water maiden takes him by the hand, leads him to the boat, and conducts him over the lagoons to the Island of the Blessed.

In the works of this honourable patriarch we have also described the subject-matter of the many others

who laboured partly as contemporary, partly as his pupils in Venice. Mary, with or without a following of saints, and occasionally another saint, who instead of Mary forms the central figure, are almost the only themes treated in the altar-pieces and the broad half-length pictures. Next to the Madonna—and this is a characteristic of the religious spirit of the age—St. Jerome plays the principal part: an old man repentant of his past and recognising that everything earthly is vain.

A proud artistic spirit, mental sufferings, and buried hopes—such is the life history of Alvise Vivarini. As the last offshoot of the old artist family of Murano, he struggled for decades to hold the field beside Bellini. That gloomy and severely archaic art which Bartolommeo Vivarini had brought from Squarcione's studio to Venice was revived in his hands. Plastic strength and an almost ascetic simplicity are the characteristics of his early works: he loves the black cowl of monks, old wrinkled faces, and furrowed hands. His picture of *St. Clara* especially—an old abbess holding the crozier with a firm grasp—is so full of the sentiment of the cloister that one thinks of Zurbaran. But from being an opponent he become an imitator of Giovanni Bellini. After he had battled in vain for the Muranese ideals, he now wished to show that he could also do all that was admired in his opponent; gave to his figures the weary droop of the head and the melancholy expression of Bellini's; and endeavoured

to be mild instead of harsh, tender instead of rough. This endeavour to feel with the sensibility of another became the tragedy of his life. At first sight one can hardly distinguish his paintings from Bellini's; the features of the enthroned Madonna are the same, the angels make similar music, and the mantle of Mary falls in the same soft, curved lines. The female saints standing about the throne seem the sisters of those who do homage to the Virgin in Bellini's paintings. Nevertheless, a responsive chord is not struck by the pictures; one seems to feel that Alvise himself had the oppressed feeling of a man of compromise, who no longer expresses himself and could not equal his model. With Bellini everything is veiled and dreamy, animated by that great repose which flowed from the artist's soul into his works. Alvise, the awkward and struggling talent, lacking confidence in himself, does not achieve this effect. His colour remains hard and the sentiment sullen. Grudgingly he finally withdrew to die almost unnoticed.

Even Cima and Basaiti, his pupils, had in the meanwhile deserted to Bellini. The only novelty in their works is the element of landscape. Cima da Conegliano, who in his *Pietà* in the Academy has a harsh Muranese effect, but later grew to be soft and lyric like Bellini, filled the narrow circle of his artistic activity with honest ability; he interprets contemplation and quiet solemnity in a simple and unpretentious manner, though less delicately than Bellini. He is

independent in that he places the throne of Mary in the open landscape instead of in the gloom of a church. He was not a native of Venice but of the Alpine region, and this love of the mountaineer for his home is expressed in his paintings. He never misses a chance to represent the splendid mountains and valley in which he passed his youth, delighting especially in the wonderful, cold effects of autumn. A deep blue sky, harmonious in tone and full of gleaming clouds, melts into the green, brown, and blue colours in which the earth gleams. Quiet melancholy and idyllic peace are the prevailing sentiments in all his landscapes.

Basaiti experienced a similar development. In his early works, like the *Pietà* in Munich, he endeavoured to surpass Mantegna in pathos; later he became mild and imitated Bellini in sentiment and colour, but without losing his individuality as a landscape painter. The coast of Illyria and Dalmatia whence he came is a bare and rugged country, sloping precipitously to the sea, whose wild ravines, narrow inlets, and steep cliff walls remind us of the fjords of Norway. The wild character of his home is reflected in the landscape background of Basaiti's pictures. Bartolommeo Montagna of Vicenza, a great and serious artist, may also be classed with the group halfway between Mantegna and Bellini.

With the artists described below there is no longer a trace of Muranese influence; they stand from the beginning upon the ground prepared by Bellini. Scant justice has been done to Vittore

Carpaccio by the general opinion, based upon the subjects of his paintings, that he was a pupil of Gentile Bellini. Next to Gentile he is esteemed the greatest epic painter of the school, as is evinced by his fresh narrative talent in the use of rich buildings, girlish heads, and trim figures of youth to compose gay and festive novels. Indeed .Carpaccio's best-known work, the cycle of the *Legend of St. Ursula*, may be described with the same words as Gentile's paintings. The spectator takes part in diplomatic audiences; sees gondolas and richly pennoned ships riding the waves; gazes upon half classic, half oriental monuments, and before them, upon terraces and stairways, a festively adorned multitude: proud senators, elegant youths, beautiful women, musicians sounding fanfares, and gay banners fluttering in the breeze. He has created a fairy world of pompous palaces, picturesque costumes, and gleaming waves. But herein also lies the difference between him and Gentile. While the latter painted architectural views with the dry eye of the illustrator, Carpaccio is a poet, who interweaves reality with the charm of a fairy story; leading us from the earth to dreamland, where there are only heavenly beings and pure feelings. He does not depict Venice, but rather the "courts of love" of Provence and of German legend, redolent with linden blossoms, peopled by slender princesses and enchanted king's sons. His pictures are *fêtes galantes*, the scene of which is laid in paradise. As in *St. Ursula's Dream* in the Venetian

Academy he has depicted the entire mysticism of Christianity, so his *Presentation in the Temple* and his *Coronation of the Virgin* are also of a delicate though painful beauty. Even the two courtesans sitting, in the picture of the Museo Correr, upon the balcony of their house, have been made angels by Carpaccio: street women with the soul of a Madonna. One almost believes that he had descended in direct line from that Johannes de Alemannia who had once come from the home of Suso to Venice.

Of the remaining painters of this group, Andrea Previtali of Bergamo, who is probably the most nearly related in spirit to Giovanni Bellini, is sometimes surprising in the intimate, almost German character of his landscapes. The *Martyrdom of St. Catherine*, by Vincenzo Catena, is an achievement before which one lingers admiringly in the church of Santa Maria Mater Domini, not only because the landscape (a wide plain with the sea glimmering in the distance) is of such heavenly beauty, but because it so completely reflects the soul of this spiritual epoch. This maiden, about whose neck the millstone has already been bound, yet who makes no complaint and sheds no tears, bowing herself in silent humility to the will of God, is the incarnation of the triumph of soul over body.

In contrast to the above masters, revolving like little planets about the sun of Bellini, an independent position is maintained only by the few who might be termed Venetian Netherlanders. Venice had, since

the beginning of its artistic development, been united by many bonds with the North. As Johannes de Alemannia had carried the style of Stephan Lochner to the Lagoons, so Antonello da Messina had in 1473 brought the technique of oil painting from the Netherlands. As the portraits of Giovanni Bellini sometimes appear Netherlandish, so Marco Marziale's name only is Italian, and his style as Flemish as if he had been an associate of Roger van der Weyden. Another bond between north and south was furnished by Jacopo de' Barbari, who painted the first purely still-life subject in the history of art—the partridge in the Augsburg Gallery—influenced Dürer at Nuremberg, and ended as a court painter in Brussels.

IX. Memling

What Botticelli was for Florence, Perugino for Umbria, Borgognone for Milan, and Bellini for Venice, Hans Memling was for the Netherlands. In the quiet hospital of St. John at Bruges where he laboured, the battle-cry of the age of Savonarola became a soft and harmonious echo.

Even after the appearance of Goes, there had been mockers in the Netherlands. The short-lived Geertgen van St. Jans occupies a similar position in the North to that of Piero di Cosimo in Italy. He is said to have lived in the priory of St. John at Haarlem, from which, however, it does not follow that he had the character

of a monk. In his paintings he appears as an exuberant young man—cracking jokes over religion and sticking out his tongue at the priests. Only once, when he painted the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ* (Vienna), did he succeed in remaining serious. In the corresponding picture from the legend of St. John, he shows, by weaving quite burlesque elements into the subject, how heartily he made merry over these subjects of a distorted mediæval view of life. The Emperor Julian the Apostate, commanding the bones of John to be burnt, is the embodied king of the theatre; the grotesque grave-diggers resemble Brueghel's merry-andrews, and the knights of St. John attending the celebration look at the relics of their patron as if they were asses' bones. In the Amsterdam picture of the *Holy Family*, he has painted in the foreground the tenderest female heads, such as only a lover could paint, and behind them stupid-looking children in dressing gowns, and waddling, bow-legged choristers lighting a chandelier. It reminds one of Crabbe or Heine spoiling the sentiment of a poem by some low or trivial remark. Behind the enthusiastic Faust stands the mocking Mephistopheles.

When Hans Memling lived times had changed. The parody and skepticism—the spirit of the *opéra bouffe*—had long been followed by romantic longing, and Thomas à Kempis had awakened new religious enthusiasm in the Netherlands.

A young and jolly comrade (so the legend relates),

after a joyful wanderer's life, became a soldier, and while fighting under Charles the Bold at Nancy was severely wounded. Painfully he dragged himself to Bruges to sink unconscious at the gate of the Hospital of St. John, into which he was admitted and there happily cured. Out of gratitude and without price, he painted for the hospital the pictures still to be seen there. Having fallen in love with the Sister of Mercy who had carefully tended him, like Tannhäuser, he made a pilgrimage to Rome to find redemption, and died as a monk in the Carthusian monastery of Miraflores.

As in many other cases, science has destroyed this beautiful legend. We know to-day that Hans Memling was a native of Mommlingen near Mayence, became a pupil and associate of Roger van der Weyden, and later figures as a wealthy burgher at Bruges. What a pity! History gathers in her dead, and the legend makes them immortal. Memling's pictures are more in accordance with his legendary character than with that of the owner of three houses at Bruges. No learned critic could characterise the essence of Memling's work more beautifully than the legend has done. His art actually resembles a quiet cell in which a sick man who had once galloped through the meadows, a trim soldier upon a white charger, now lived, wounded and weary. "Imaginez un lieu privilégié, une sorte de retraite angélique idéalement silencieuse et fermée, où les passions se taisent, où les troubles cessent,

où l'on prie, ou l'on adore, où tout se transfigure, où naissent des sentiments nouveaux, où poussent comme des lis des ingénuités, des douceurs, une mansuétude surnaturelle, et vous aurez une idée de l'ame unique de Memlinc et du miracle qu'il opère en ses tableaux." With these words Fromentin in his *Maitres d'autrefois* has described the charm of Memling's art.

One cannot fully enjoy him in all his works. When he attempts to be strong, pathetic, or powerful, his talent does not suffice. This is true of the *Crucifixion* at Lübeck, and also in part of his *Last Judgment.* At least he has not depicted the terrors of the *dies iræ* with the power of his teacher Roger, but with the childishness of Lochner. St. Michael, modestly weighing the souls, looks like a disguised maiden; and the damned approach the pit of hell with souls just as pure as all the dainty nude virgins ascending in single file to the gate of heaven, on the left. He is only great in subjects of youthful beauty and tender love. As in the legend, so in his works he appears as a natural enthusiast, who, because his earthly love has scorned him, chooses a heavenly bride, Mary, rich in mercies, whom he celebrates with the rapture of a troubadour. Indescribable in their girlish freshness and chaste grace are the women in his *Betrothal of St. Catherine;* and touching is the devoted piety with which he relates the *Legend of St. Ursula.* In contrast to the wide spaces, ravishing beauty, and festal attire of Carpaccio's treatment of the subject all is here childish

THE MADONNA

Vienna Gallery

simplicity, miniature daintiness, humility and peace. Even in the *Martyrdom of the Virgins* there is neither complaint nor fear of death. With folded hands and meek devotion, they depart from life with that believing equanimity for which the terrors of death are only the foreboding of heavenly joys.

Memling's difference from his Netherlandish predecessors is equally apparent. While Jan van Eyck was enamoured of the splendour of the world, and Roger, the painter of pathos, depicted careworn matrons, Memling's works are pervaded by a mild, lyric sentiment, a breath of feminine blessedness: his fair angels with the long flowing hair, these slender figures of maidens and dreaming Maries. The traits are the same which distinguished Bellini or Borgognone from older masters like Pisanello or Tura. The difference between Memling and these Italian contemporaries is less obvious. From an external point of view the Netherlander is easily recognisable; he has painted but a single picture, the Madonna of the Vienna Museum, which shows familiarity with Renaissance decoration, as is evinced by a round arcade opening to view and by the *putti* playing and holding a heavy garland hanging festively over the throne of Mary. Otherwise Gothic forms are the prevalent ones in his paintings. While the worldly-minded Jan van Eyck avoided this style, and reverted to the massive Romanesque figures, Memling, although he was familiar with the Renaissance, preferred the aspiring, ethereal Gothic, because it alone

was in harmony with his slender, spiritual figures. Between Memling's women and those of the Italians there also exists that difference which Barrès sketched in his *Deux femmes du bourgeois de Bruges*. The Italian type is Mary, Memling's Martha; there the animated woman, here the good Cinderella. There, the broad, sultry lagoons, over the mirror-like surface of which gondolas glide to the music of the mandolin; here the narrow canals of Bruges, in whose cold water white swans bathe their snowy plumage.

The rich Bruges which Jan van Eyck had known had already become a dead city when Memling painted it. The great house of the Medici had collapsed; the foreign merchants who had formerly traded there had gone elsewhere; the canals were deserted, and the palaces had fallen into decay. This poetry of solitude which, like the sentiment of the fable of the sleeping princess, pervaded Bruges, as it now pervades Rothenburg, hovers over Memling's pictures. He also gazed with the eye of a romanticist upon those defiant city gates and mighty churches, the proud survivals of a great past which towered aloft in an impoverished present. Even upon him the wide streets, once the scenes of festal processions, but now so useless and devoid of people, had a melancholy effect.

But the memory of the Hospital of St. John—of whitewashed walls, white beds, and Sisters of Mercy—is awakened by his paintings. Borgognone is a monk, the man in a cowl who, tired of life, fled to nature and

to her peace, and his pictures awaken the sentiment that one feels in driving on a fine afternoon from Florence to the Certosa. The pictures of Bellini have the effect which one experiences in passing from the sunlight of the Piazza into the incense-filled gloom of St. Mark's. Quite a different sentiment is awakened by the traveller wandering through the uneven, moss-grown streets of Bruges to the Hospital of St. John. A little gate is opened and he is led into a courtyard, where under ancient linden trees poor old men dream upon the benches in contemplative idleness. *Béguines* in black and red costumes and neat white caps come and go. There is something sad and resigned about these maidens, who live the lives of nuns, away from their families, and are transformed into such staid and serious beings by the life within these walls. Memling's pictures are pervaded by the sentiment of a hospital. One examines them with the same feeling which fair and sickly maidens arouse. It seems as if he had observed nature with the eyes of a sick man, sitting in his little room and looking through leaded glass panes into the joyful world.

Why are the people who sat to him all so pale? Why do they hold the rosary or a prayer-book, and fold their hands so thankfully? Why does the world, bathed in mild light, stretch out in such a solemn and Sunday attire in the background, so green and spring-like, as if the splendour of the first day of creation still rested upon it? They seem to be people who for the

first time step out of the oppressive air of the sick-room into God's own nature, just as the old men of the Hospital of St. John realise, with thankful happiness, that the dear sun again shines upon them. Observe all the flowers and books which he loves to keep up in his pictures of the Madonnas. Does he not treat Mary like a sick child to whom one brings picture-books, elder-blossoms, and lilies? How touching are these flower-pots, looking as if they had been tended by a sick child, which Memling loves to place at the feet of Mary. The picture-books of which his pale maidens so abstractedly turn the leaves have the sentiment of a sick-room; as do also the windows so tightly locked that no cool draught may enter, and the enchanted bit of the world seen through the tiny window-panes. Nature is not thus enjoyed by one who has her always before him, but appears only to a sick man standing at the window so touching, so holy in her beauty. He sees the rider upon his white horse approaching along the lonesome road; he observes the reapers mowing in the cornfield; the waggon driver asking a passer-by for the road; and he rejoices in the swans paddling over there in the pond, and in the sheep reposing upon the sunny green meadow. A thatched hut standing lonely in a field, an old mill or a decayed wooden bridge stretching across gleaming water, is sufficient to fill him with thoughts and emotions. His maidens themselves have the beauty of a sick-bed; that fine and spiritual appearance which the atmosphere of a room gives to people.

Their features are mild and resigned, their movements powerless and silent; and in touching coquetry they have donned their most costly garments and bedecked themselves with pearl diadems and with rings. Such thoughts, which others had long ago read in Memling's pictures, gave origin to the legend of the wounded soldier who lived as a sick man in the Hospital of St. John.

The same charm of lovable silence, the same bashfulness which anxiously avoids everything brutal, pervades the Madonnas of Gerard David, who appears in all respects a continuator of Memling. He also loves women with high brows and bashful downcast eyes. and knows how to make the expression of thoughtfulness, of sublimity speak from these eyes. An altar-piece painted in 1509 for the church of the Carmelite nuns in Bruges, which afterwards found its way to Rouen, is considered his masterpiece. His adoption in other paintings of the theme of the Madonna in a bower of roses, which had been so popular in the Cologne school, likewise shows how nearly related he was to Memling and Lochner. Mary and the other saints have that purity and dreamy thoughtfulness which enchants us in Memling's paintings; they sit motionless there as if rooted to the spot by the overflow of psychic experiences; they have experienced the holiest, but their lips are silent, as if they feared through loud words to disturb the solemn repose. A certain melancholy foreboding and silent reticence hover over

them, giving to David's pictures also a touch of tender, delicate reserve. Only in later works (he lived until 1523) did his style change, in accordance with the changed sentiment of the time.

F. Leonardo

The result of our studies has shown that Savonarola is in no wise to be considered as the grave-digger of art, but that the *quattrocento* owes to the religious movement which emanated from him the most refined and subtle works of art which it produced. It is true that through him the gods of Greece were expelled from Italy, and that it was now all over with those narratives from the Old Testament and the legends of the saints which had served the realists as a pretext to depict the pomp and splendour of their time. In place of this, under the influence of increased emotional life, a new note came into religious painting. By reminding the artists that the highest aim of Christian art was to represent not the external but the inner world, the beauty not of the body but of the soul, he revealed to them the entire domain of the soul-life. In agitating against the worldly excesses of art he contributed to transform the realist's love of nature to a higher, more significant beauty.

While the chief aim of the primitives had been portraiture, the masters of the age of Savonarola

created men who were indeed true to nature, yet animated by the breath of a higher life, and removed from everything earthly by the intensity of their emotions. A subjective idea of beauty took the place of the objective portrayal of nature. Whether the heads were more melancholy, as in the case of Bellini, more sentimental as with Perugino, or childishly good as in Memling's paintings—the command of form is entirely subsidiary to the expression of the soul's emotion. The most intangible spiritual conditions were painted; such as the self-sacrificing melancholy of Mary, the prophetic inspiration of John, the agonising repentance of Jerome, the inspired faith of Ursula, the mystic fervour of Francis, the chaste devotion of Catherine, and the blessed ecstasy of the angels. After the conquest of nature accomplished by the realists the awakening of the soul followed.

This awakening also changed the character of portraiture. The painters following Pisanello and Jan van Eyck had with an acute realism painted merely the epidermis—the exterior of man, as he sat immobile in presence of the artist; but in the portraits of Memling, Bellini, and Botticelli, the corporeal is no longer the highest aim. A breath of sadness or of dreamy thoughtfulness begins to animate the rigid heads. The emotional character or the fate of the subject is indicated by means of mysterious inscriptions or attributes, making the portrait a human document, a confession of the artist's soul or a reflection of his mood.

Corresponding with this physical effect in portraiture, a similar element appears in landscape. Although the realists had painted landscape backgrounds, the consciousness that it was in the power of an artist to reflect the sentiment of the action in the landscape had not yet been awakened. The two elements had been disconnectedly portrayed, the *Entombment of Christ*, for example, being depicted in the midst of a laughing spring landscape. The ucceeding painters, however, as they had discovered the soul of man, discovered also the soul of nature. In accordance with the sentiment of the principal action the earth is pervaded by a joyful peace or by a silent woe. Man and nature are attuned to the same great chord.

Greatly to the advantage of these new psychic elements, for which flowers and music were also very important, the views of colour were also affected by the revolution. In their pronounced realism the primitives had given to each object its own bright and full colours; and after Piero della Francesca had discovered atmospheric effects, artists devoted their entire ability to mastering the most difficult problems of painting, the depicting of light and air. The masters of the epoch of Savonarola, less analysts than dreamers, went a step further. The objective presentation of a natural impression was no longer the final aim of Bellini and his associates; they attempted rather to make colour a means of expressing sentiment, thus discovering the intrinsic property of colour to awaken

effects akin to those caused by music. The outlines are softened, a tender twilight veils the objects. The period of chiaroscuro thus begins.

On the other hand, equally serious formal tendencies went parallel with these psychological and colouristic achievements. After Savonarola had forbidden the use of contemporary fashions, the ideal costume had regained its former importance, and the question of its artistic treatment arose. The study of draperies, which Mantegna had already emphasised, now became an important branch of art. The same religious fervour led to the exclusion of all anecdotic and other details. At a time when the love of nature rather than the religious significance of the theme stood in the foreground, artists recognised no bounds in adding the most incongruous objects. Different episodes, past, present, and future, were represented in a single picture; and all kinds of accessory figures, having nothing to do with the action, were grouped about the principal event as disinterested spectators. The masters of Savonarola's time, in order to obtain a uniform impression of the whole, did away with all these accessories. A powerful simplicity took the place of disintegration. For this reason even the form of the altar-pieces was changed. Formerly composed of a central picture, wings, predelle, and lunettes, they were now confined to a single panel. and every figure was excluded which had no part in the principal action. The presentation now resembles a lyric poem or a uniform drama rather than a scattering

epic. A psychic keynote pervades the whole and assigns to each figure its corresponding rôle. These changes furthermore led to new problems of composition which must be equally definite with the sentiment expressed. While formerly the figures had been arranged as a frieze, the question now was to concentrate them, giving a base and an apex to the picture, and to express the dramatic unity of the event by a corresponding arrangement. Thus the aim of composition became that *concinnitas* which Alberti declared as the ideal of beauty: a complete harmony of the different parts, so that nothing could be added or taken away without injuring the whole. The loose presentation of the earlier painters was replaced by a style involving a rigid arrangement; rhythmic simplicity and soft curved lines prevail.

Adding together all the attainments of the epoch, it becomes possible—at least in part—to conceive of the mighty figure of Leonardo da Vinci, seemingly far removed from the earth, in his proper relation to the age in which he lived; and to understand how he as a psychologist, as a master of light and shade and as the founder of the laws of composition, grew out of the age of Savonarola. He attempted and achieved the solution of all problems proposed by the age.

To begin with, he made the psychological problem proposed by Savonarola an object of scientific research; the chapter in his *Treatise on Painting* which relates to it, as well as many anecdotes of his life, show how

much he was occupied with the study of expression.[1] In order to study sudden outbursts of feeling, he invited peasants to visit him, related adventurous anecdotes, and suddenly frightened them; he escorted criminals to the place of execution in order to see the terror of death reflected in their faces. In the so-called caricatures his aim is to exaggerate the peculiarities of the human countenance to the utmost extent of organic possibility but at the same time to portray with harsh directness all shades of expression. In like manner the heads which recur in his drawings are psychological studies. His ideal is not physical strength or voluptuous beauty, but the physical one of delicacy, softness, and dreaminess. He is continually searching for new *nuances* of quivering love, maternal joy, and childish delight. The freshness of youth is subdued to a soft melancholy, and the dignity of old age is transfigured by philosophical resignation. A commentary upon the heads which he painted are the hands. Even his master Verrocchio had heightened the charm of his youthful figures by the dainty pose of slender fingers. Leonardo, going further, uses the hands as a psychological commentary, assigning to them dramatic participation in the action.

Besides the psychological problem, he was occupied

[1] The best edition of Leonardo's *Trattato della pittura* is in J. P. Richter's edition of his works (2 vols., London, 1883), which also contains an English translation. Others are by Ludwig in the *Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte* (Vienna, 1882), with German translation, and by Tabarrini (Rome, 1890).—Ed.

with that of colour. It is interesting to note that he was a distinguished musician. It is related by Vasari that even in his youth he had occupied himself with music, and learned to play the lyre; that he was called to Milan only because the duke found great pleasure in his lute-playing, and that upon this occasion he took with him an instrument, invented by himself, which softened the sound, making it so melting and euphonious that he surpassed all the musicians of Milan. As all painters who were also musicians—Giorgione as well as Gainsborough and Corot—loved soft and melting colours, it is no accident that singing and musical Venice witnessed the first triumphs of colour, and that the musician Leonardo was the founder of the real pictorial style.

But as he was a mathematician as well as a musician, he solved as many formal as pictorial problems. In his *Treatise on Painting* he dedicated an especial chapter to draperies, advising that they should be studied from clay figures draped with cloths soaked in plaster of Paris; and he attained in his compositions all that his predecessors Perugino, Mantegna, and Bellini had endeavoured to accomplish singly. His sepulchral inscription states that the "eurhythmy" of the ancients had been his chief aim. In such a versatility he stands out like a great gleaming sun at the boundary of two centuries. He rendered it possible to unite caressing charm of form with quivering emotion, and the formal beauty of the sculptures of the Parthenon

with deep spirituality; he founded the pictorial style, and at the same time established new laws for linear composition—enough problems to occupy a whole generation of painters.

The few pictures which he painted when no more important questions occupied his mind, and which he did not usually finish, but cast aside as soon as he was himself satisfied with the solution of the problem, were in reality only illustrations for his *Treatise on Painting;* stray bits from the gigantic treasure-house of his soul. In the angels' heads of Verrocchio's *Baptism of Christ,* the keynote of Leonardo's art is given. For the first time we behold the dreamy, melancholy eyes, the soft curly locks, and the quiet enigmatic smile, with which Leonardo's name is usually associated. In the female portrait of the Liechtenstein Gallery (Vienna)[1] he is occupied with the problem of the demonic woman. In the presence of this pale face with its cruel almond eyes, one thinks of a murderess, of Lady Macbeth. These psychological characteristics are supplemented by the landscape; for it is no accident that behind this head, with its exotic, almost Chinese effect, an Asiatic plant, the bamboo shrub, arises. In the *Resurrection* at Berlin the

[1] This painting is more commonly (as, for example, by Berenson) and with greater probability ascribed to Verrocchio. The consensus of nearly all expert opinion is against attributing the *Resurrection* to Leonardo; and, as the author himself observes in his remarks upon Boltraffio, it should perhaps be ascribed to this master. (Below, p. 332.)—Ed.

psychological elements are united with a new achievement in composition. While earlier art depicted three guards about the sarcophagus of Jesus, Leonardo represents two youthful saints on bended knee in ecstatic adoration. The young deacon, bowing softly forward, raises his hands in fervent worship, while Lucy, with hands folded upon her breast, is quite lost in blessed ecstasy. The composition is so arranged that the figures form an equilateral triangle, and the Baroque Christ is an interesting parallel with these works of Filippino which also form a strong connecting link between the Dominican art of the fourteenth and the Jesuit art of the seventeenth centuries.

The *Last Supper*, in the former convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan, is a psychological drama. Earlier artists had depicted the disciples either sitting quietly at table or receiving the Host from the Saviour, without uniting them by any common thought or action. In order to bring unity into the action and to attain a motive which should vibrate like an electric shock through the whole representation, Leonardo adopts the words of Jesus, "Verily, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me," as a starting-point and shows how each individual disciple was affected by these words. Timidity, silent melancholy, sadness, horror, rising anger, listening, questioning, terror, indignation, curiosity, and pain are reflected in the heads and hands of the apostles in ever-renewed excitement. For Leonardo does not confine himself to facial expression,

THE LAST SUPPER

Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan

but makes the hands also assist in giving the highest animation to the dramatic scene. But this is not because it lies in the nature of the southerner to "speak with his hands," as Goethe observed; for all Italian painters before Ghirlandajo made little use of gesture and seated their figures in the same repose as did the northern masters. If Leonardo makes them gesticulate, if one, as Goethe says, can read from the hands the words that each individual speaks, this is to be attributed not to the Italian national character, but rather to the circumstance that every epoch emphasises a particular artistic problem, and at that time mimicry and the language of gesture had become the most important field of study. His drawings also reveal how gradually the composition took shape in Leonardo's mind; how with increasing facility he succeeded in arranging all the single figures within the architectural composition; in creating and dissolving contrasts, in changing motions of the lines lingering and again hurrying forward; and finally in harmonising all by means of an unexampled rhythm. As a pictorial achievement—in the manner in which the figures softly dissolved in space and the light streamed through the window into the half-darkened hall—the *Last Supper* must have been a revelation, although at the present time this can no longer be seen, but only felt.

The *Madonna of the Grotto*,[1] on the other hand, still

[1] There is much dispute as to the location of the original of this

gives an idea of Leonardo's treatment of colour. In this painting all the aims of the master sound together in rich accord. Again we see those beautiful faces, gazing in such blessed happiness: the Madonna bending dreamily over the Child, and the guardian angel as far removed from this earth as if he were listening to the soft, distant notes of a violin. It may be seen how Leonardo first arranged the whole in the strictly geometrical form of an equilateral triangle, and then immediately disintegrated this pyramid of lines by his treatment of the light; which, falling from the upper left-hand side of the painting, quivers like a soft chord through the enchanted twilight of the grotto, revealing one object in plastic relief, another in veiled picturesque haze. All sharp lines are dissolved and each detail vanishes with soft delicacy into the other.

Of his later Florentine paintings the *Madonna in the Lap of St. Anne*[1] is perhaps the one in which he carries his principles of composition the furthest. In order to bring the figures into the form of a pyramid he places Mary in the lap of St. Anne, bending over towards

painting. Although some careful critics believe that the examples in the Louvre and the National Gallery (London) are both by the hand of Leonardo, the preponderance of expert opinion (Morelli, Müntz, Müller-Walde, Richter, Berenson) attributes only the former to him. Professor Muther regards the London picture as a copy by Ambrogio de Predis. (Below, p. 333).—Ed.

[1] The oil painting after this celebrated cartoon, executed in part by Leonardo, is in the Louvre; the cartoon in the Royal Academy (London) being a variation by him on the same theme.—Ed.

the Christ-child, who forms the basis of a pyramid on the other side. With this he has joined a new problem of light. While in the *Madonna of the Grotto* a gloomy dolomite landscape is used to dissolve the pale faces and hands in the mild gleam of a delicate chiaroscuro, in this picture the heads rise airily and softly in a bright and quivering atmosphere.

The smoke of powder and dust probably formed the atmosphere of the *Battle of Anghiari*. The drawings after this lost mural painting only show the psychological and compositional problems which he attempted. The same master to whom the highest beauty seen by an artist since the days of Phidias had been revealed, is here the painter of raving madness and snorting rage. A hoarse, roaring sound is heard; men hack and thrust, horses rear, neigh, and bury their teeth in each other, in a Gordian knot impossible to disentangle. But, however impetuously everything is commingled, the great master of composition holds the masses firmly in hand. The crossed forelegs of the prancing horses form the apex of a triangle, within which all the other figures find a proper place.

Even more complicated in arrangement, and almost Baroque in feeling, is the *Adoration of the Kings*.[1] All former painters, placing Mary at one side of the picture, had represented the kings as approaching

[1] This picture, in an unfinished state, survives in the Uffizi; and the world-famed *Mona Lisa*, mentioned below, is the pride of the Louvre.—Ed.

with stately tread from the other side. In Leonardo's paintings all is commotion. With great curiosity the people press forward, gazing, inquiring, wondering, adoring, and guiding others to the scene; hands are raised and heads stretched forward. At the same time he has changed the relief-like composition in profile which was formerly customary into the direct opposite. Mary again forms the apex of the pyramid, the base of which is indicated by the adoring kings. All about are contrasts dissolving into harmonies, and a waving motion proceeding from Mary and streaming back towards her.

Mona Lisa, whose portrait occupied him at the same time, is as little beautiful as the Vienna portrait. She is uncanny with her missing eyebrows and the witch-like shimmer of her unfathomable eyes, deep as the sea; which seem to glance now passionately, then ironically, then false and catlike; soon they blink at us, then stare cold and dead into the infinite—soulless as the sea which yesterday swallowed men and to-day lies there seductively beautiful, mocking at the misdeed which it has committed. As he has in the Vienna portrait represented the perverse charm of a murderess he has here depicted the Sphinx's riddle of woman's nature. Vasari further relates that Leonardo while painting this portrait had singers and musicians present, that the young woman might enjoy their music and thus avoid the rigid appearance of most portraits. This also explains why the picture at that

time affected artists like a new gospel. However softly and tenderly Botticelli's maidens dream, they are not free from a certain expression of metallic rigidity; seeming more like costly artistic jewels than living and breathing people. But in this portrait, at one stroke, the fulness of life and the charm of momentary expression had been attained. Painters marvelled how softly and mistily the figure arose from the background; they admired the nose which seemed to vibrate, the eye which seemed to blink, and the mouth which appeared to smile, and the bust seeming to breathe. The pale, nervous, and quivering hands form a commentary to the head, and at the same time serve the purpose of composition. By resting them firmly upon the waist, Leonardo has achieved the simple outlines of a triangle, the apex of which is the head, while the basic angles are indicated by the elbows. The landscape of the background echoes the mysterious mood of the entire painting. For although Piero della Francesca and Piero di Cosimo, improving upon the "medallion" style of early Italian portraits, had placed the figures in realistic landscape, it was reserved for Leonardo to make the landscape a psychical commentary on the figure. For this fantastic, blue-black world, sultry and gloomy, encircling the pale woman, is as mysterious and unfathomable as the being wandering through these meadows.

It might be said that Leonardo had in this picture painted himself and his own unfathomable Faust-like

nature. As the sphinx Mona Lisa stands there in inpenetrable silence, so there is something sphinx-like, demonic, and unapproachable in the nature of this man, who, an illegitimate son and a childless man, wandered lonely through life like a wonderful magician; great as an investigator, and even greater as the seducer who poured the sweet poison of sensuality into Italian art; and who, after centuries, hurls at every one approaching him with a critical probe the crushing words of the Earth Spirit:

> "Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst,
> Nicht mir."

MONA LISA

Louvre

Chapter IIII

Germanic Painting during the Age of the Reformation

I. The Beginnings of the Italian Influence

IN the same year that Leonardo da Vinci closed his eyes in the castle of Amboise, Michel Wohlgemuth died at Nuremberg. These names are typical of two different worlds: of the Renaissance and the middle age, of free artistic activity and the craftsman's handiwork.

It has often been regretted that beginning with the sixteenth century German artists travelled southwards and, like the emperors of the middle age, forgot their home for Italy. But they also forgot for a time in Italy the stifling air and the trivial caste system of the North. From philistine narrowness they had come into a land of freedom, into a happy enchanted world; and from being sycophants, they had become lords. "Here the arts freeze," wrote Erasmus in the safe-conduct which he gave Holbein, and Dürer "froze for lack of the sun" after his return from Venice.

The dream of his life was ended, and the cage of philistinism again received him.

It is touching to read the biographies of German artists of the fifteenth century. While the Italian masters wandered upon the heights of life, as the "singer walks with the king," the German painter was a poor devil of the same guild with saddlers, glaziers, and bookbinders. First, he had to serve long years as an apprentice with the master; and then he entered into the trade by espousing the daughter or widow of a painter. There was no magnificent court, no aristocracy of distinguished connoisseurs. The patronage of art was in the hands of good burghers, who donated an altar-piece in order to buy their way into heaven. The panels, together with the necessary wood carving, were completed as well as might be in the workshop with the assistance of journeymen; and if upon the delivery they were pronounced well done, the wife of the painter received a *pourboire*.

It is therefore hardly proper to speak of a style of German art during the fifteenth century. The problem was only to narrate a theme as clearly as possible and to impart strict religious instruction. This was done by the painters with rustic coarseness. It is not necessary to assume that they acquired their knowledge from Roger van der Weyden; rather, from the same requirements a similar style resulted. The problem was to be popular, drastic, and plastic; for which reason they applied the colours as thick as possible; screaming

instead of speaking, and exaggerating nature to the point of caricature in order to be understood by even the most stupid. The features are contorted; heavy tears and drops of blood flow, and sprawling arms are stretched out; the participants strike, thrust, stamp, and spit in the midst of blood-curdling scenes of martyrdom; and, as in the passion-plays, farces are introduced in order to please the sense of humour. If they cannot be impassioned the artists are at least soberly honest. There is no silent thoughtfulness, no ethereal grace; but everything is substantial, straightforward, and of an honest, home-made morality.

It is a characteristic fact that Martin Schongauer, the chief master of Colmar, is better known from his line engravings than from his paintings. Not having the opportunity of expressing himself as a painter, he adopted the engraver's art. His Madonna at Colmar is harsh, severe, and of rugged power, but the smaller pictures of Mary at Munich and Vienna are modest and trusting. His best work, however, is his drawings.

Wood engraving assumed a similar importance for the Nuremberg artists, who illustrating for the early printers discovered a field in which they could move more freely. In their altar-pieces they laboured as burghers, substantially and honestly. Until 1472, the largest atelier was that of Hans Pleydenwurff, to whom modern investigation has attributed a *Crucifixion* and a *Marriage of Catherine* in Munich, a *Crucifixion*

in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg, a *Deposition* in Paris, and an altar-piece in Breslau. Then Wilhelm, his son, whose principal work is said to be the Peringsdorff altar of 1488, set up in business. By marrying the widow of the elder Pleydenwurff, Michel Wohlgemuth acquired his business also. In him the Germans of the *quattrocento* possessed the painter whom they deserved. The number of his works is enormous; there are examples at Munich, Nuremberg, Schwabach, Heilsbronn, Zwickau, and many other places. But whoever is familiar with Dürer's portrait of his teacher—the head with the hawk's nose and cold, steely glance—knows also Wohlgemuth's paintings. With a healthy realism, more of a manufacturer than an artist, he approaches nature rigidly and crudely, and has a substantial manner of placing green beside red, and red beside yellow. Such an art was sufficient for the best spirit of his day.

Nördlingen, Ulm, Memmingen and Augsburg should also be mentioned as seats of German artistic activity. In Nördlingen, Friedrich Herlin of Rothenburg, who had sought enlightenment in the studio of Roger van der Weyden, was much admired for his technical dexterity. Bartholomäus Zeitblom of Ulm is the type of the Suabian pastor, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, and carefully weighing every word. If he wishes to be fiery he becomes unctuous and his lyric poetry becomes dry common sense. With Bernhard Strigel of Memmingen this clumsy repose is transformed into

MARTYRDOM OF ST. SEBASTIAN

Munich Gallery

Baroque exaggeration. The gestures are sprawling, the draperies puffy, and in his altar-pieces the same ruffled intricacies prevail as in the architecture of the expiring Gothic style.

Hans Holbein the elder, of Augsburg, is the only real artist among these painters. He is accomplished and versatile, full of soul and nerves; and because he was an artist, his fatherland let him starve. His youthful works, the little Madonnas in the Germanic Museum, go back to the days of ancient idealism, to the art of Lochner, being of a soft and ecstatic beauty. Then he became the most extreme leader of the new naturalistic tendencies. Especially characteristic for this phase of his style are the passion-scenes of altars at Kaisheim and Donaueschingen. The most dangerous rascals of the road are his models, and his gallery of beauty is composed of convicts, harlequins and whimsical inmates of hospitals. Finally the clarification comes. In the picture of *St. Paul's Basilica* in the Gallery of Augsburg, the man of storm and stress, who had only considered the hideous beautiful and the crazy as true, has become a serious man, who paints life with quiet objectivity. All the figures are modest portraits, among which the group representing the master himself with Ambrosius and Hans, his sons, is especially celebrated. With increasing age, his taste became purer and simple beauty his chief aim; his activity closed with a really classical work, the altar-piece of *St. Sebastian* in Munich.

The Renaissance decoration and the gleaming golden colour betray the cause of this last change of style—Italy.

Not until they became acquainted with Italy did the quest of northern artists find a certain goal; and only through contact with the South did they realise that art means more than a substantial copy of nature. If during the fifteenth century the Netherlanders and even the Germans had exercised a fructifying influence upon Italy, this country now returned with interest what it owed to Johannes de Alemannia, Roger, and Goes. Thither the young artists made pilgrimages in order to refine their tastes; there they acquired that theoretical knowledge which the older painters had lacked, and became conscious of the dignity of their calling.

They did not indeed relinquish the things in which they had delighted during the epoch in which van Eyck dominated northern art. After engravers of the fifteenth century, Schongauer and the master who signs himself E. S., had begun to represent scenes from every-day life, such themes were now made subjects of pictures. After van Eyck had carefully painted every bud and leaf, and Goes and Memling had followed with real landscapes as backgrounds, the study of landscape painting as an independent branch was now begun. In addition to this, painting mastered a third domain: the fantastic. As long as the spirit of realism prevailed, artists had painted only what

they saw, looking with suspicious eye upon anything beyond this. But when, in consequence of the ecclesiastical reaction, metaphysical tendencies followed the realistic, the fantastic element at once appeared. It was developed to an even greater extent in the North than in Italy, because the fantastic is a more important element in the northern than in the Italian character. The art of engraving, which, with greater facility than the brush, follows the spirit into the world of fable, became of determinative importance. After Schongauer in his *Temptation of St. Antony* had first modestly entered the territory the artists who followed him took possession of the entire legendary domain.

Serious efforts to attain the mastery of form, on the other hand, went parallel with these "intimate" and fantastic endeavours, and the labour of investigation, which had been solved a generation earlier in Italy, began also in the North. By eliminating the episodic from the works of former painters and concentrating themselves, like the Italians, upon the execution of life-sized human figures, the northern artists attained a characteristic simplicity unknown to the fifteenth century. The study of the nude, heretofore little attempted, was raised to the rank of an artistic problem. Instead of harshness a uniform harmony of colour was adopted, and instead of a broad juxtaposition of detail, a well arranged scheme of composition. The crumpled fashionable costume of the day yields to a simple

ideal drapery. Instead of being guided by accident, they laboured in accordance with fixed, theoretically-established norms.

III. The Netherlands

Quentin Massys, the "smith of Antwerp," introduced the reform into the Netherlands. According to the legend he only became a painter because his sweetheart would not marry a smith; and although this sounds quite improbable, in the story, as in all legends, there lies a certain logical justification. When people used to the highly detailed brushwork of the old masters saw his mighty and broad technique, they necessarily sought for an explanation of this change in style, and found it in the supposition that the creator of these works had originally been a smith; a man with heavy fists and of great swinging movements, who introduced something of the vigour of his former trade into this new profession.

Standing before his *Burial of Christ* in the Antwerp Museum, one feels that even to-day, with this work, a new epoch in the art of the Netherlands begins. Form, composition, and colour—everything is new. While earlier artists worked in unbroken colours, placing full blues, reds, and greens in immediate juxtaposition, Quentin Massys subordinates this gleaming splendour to a uniform colour tone. The figures are given not in miniature form as formerly, but in

THE BANKER AND HIS WIFE

Louvre

almost life size. Nothing episodic distracts from the principal action; and the problem solved by Leonardo in his *Last Supper*—the portrayal of a complicated scene as a uniform drama, complete in itself—has also become determinative for the Netherlanders. Along with these psychological efforts he attempts also the solution of the formal problems of Leonardo. However different the movements of his figures are, he has arranged them with reference to a strict scheme of composition.

His other works also, like the *Holy Family* in Brussels, the Madonna in Berlin, and the *Pietà* in Munich, are quite without the bounds of ancient art in their greater size, more graceful movements, and broader draughtsmanship; they form the connecting link between Jan van Eyck and Rubens. Half figures, which are especially frequent, resulted as a logical consequence of the tendencies of the master. Not wishing to depart from his life-size scale, as such figures would have demanded canvases of colossal proportions, he preferred in all cases of restricted size to confine himself to half-length figures rather than to diminish the scale.

His genre pictures likewise belong to this class. What Petrus Cristus had indicated in his *St. Eligius*, Quentin Massys carried out. In his *Goldsmith and his Wife* of 1518, now in the Louvre, he did in reality nothing more than omit the halo which Petrus Cristus had given to St. Eligius. While this may seem a

very small service, it was nevertheless a decisive step; for through it the genre picture was recognised as an independent variety of painting. It is true that Quentin himself, as well as his predecessors Jan Massys and Marinus van Roymerswæle, did not venture to dispense with all ecclesiastical accessories. After painting had for a thousand years been strictly religious, such a change of repertoire could not be accomplished at one stroke. Even though it were only for appearance' sake, the artist was compelled to preserve a certain connection with the Bible. In the picture above referred to the wife of the goldsmith, although her glance lingers upon the gold, carries a dainty prayer-book adorned with miniatures in her hand. Succeeding painters proceeded to change the prayer-book for an account-book, and to transform the goldsmith and his wife into attorneys, merchants, misers, and usurers. But even in such cases a biblical content is assumed. In his picture at Vienna at least, the words of the parable of the unjust steward are added and, what is more, such paintings are not independent representations, but pendants to the equally numerous representations of St. Jerome. The joy in worldly goods depicted in the pictures of money-changers serves to emphasise their moral: all is vanity. In contrast to paintings representing man in the midst of his wealth were others warning him of the transitory character of earthly things. Gradually the pictures of St. Jerome disappeared and the biblical morals of

the others were forgotten. Pawnbrokers and advocates, surrounded by papers and documents, sit in their offices collecting money or produce from their clients; broadly painted genre pictures take the place of the original allegories. The expression of the heads was also changed. It had usually been contorted into passion, because an art occupied principally with the pathetic scenes of the passion of Christ unconsciously transferred this pathos to subjects of every-day life; but now these forced grimaces gave place to a quiet business expression.

The *Chess Players*, by Lucas van Leyden, is especially characteristic of the pathetic element in the earlier genre pictures. The people act not as if they were assembled about a gaming table, but about the cross of the Saviour. The attention is especially attracted by gesticulating hands, indicating some remote connection with Leonardo. Lucas proposed a similar problem to that solved by Dürer in his *Christ with the Scribes* and Titian in his *Tribute Money*. It is, by the way, difficult to recognise the aims of this intelligent, early deceased Dutchman. The determinative event of his life seems to have been a journey to Italy. Although so few paintings by him are preserved, he furnished rich inspiration to other artists in his engravings. Those highly-finished, thoughtful heads which we shall see in the works of the master of St. Severin are already to be found in the prints of Lucas van Leyden; and by his genre

paintings of dentists, surgeons, vagabonds, and the like, he prepared a way for later genre painters like Ostade and Brouwer.

Another Dutchman, Hieronymus Bosch, made himself a name as a visionary. All those grimacing images which were customary in mediæval decorative art, especially in the stone ornaments of Gothic cathedrals and the wood carvings of the choir stalls, were transferred by him to panel painting. He is especially fond, as was Teniers at a later day, of giving fishes the wings of bats and of creating strange monstrosities by commingling the forms of animals and vessels. Any one expecting the fantastic in our sense of the term, the dæmonic and the ghostly, would be bitterly disappointed: for his paintings have not a fantastic, but a burlesque or rather a didactic effect. His practice of giving them the form of an altar is characteristic of their significance. Whether he represents the *Seven Deadly Sins*, the *Ship of Fools*, the *Pleasures of the World* or the *Temptation of St. Antony*, it is always a sermon beginning with the fall of man and ending with hell. At the same time that Luther threw the inkstand at the devil, the last representation of the devil as the middle age conceived him passed away with Bosch. At a time when gluttony and wild sensuality had followed upon the former mortification of the flesh, he swung, as did Hogarth later, the heavy moral club, practised the art of "hanging people in colours," and painted the same Capuchin sermons with

which Sebastian Brant, Geiler von Kaisersperg, and Thomas Murner regaled their hearers.

Like Quentin Massys, he was also fond of painting biblical scenes in half-size figures, in which he appears as a sharp and malicious physiognomist. His line engravings, *Gluttony*, *Avarice*, and *Drunkenness* are further examples in which low genre painting, though under an allegorical cloak, ventures forth. Themes like the dance of the cripples, surgical operations, and quack doctors became especially popular in painting.

For the beginnings of landscape painting Hendrik Bles and Joachim Patinir are important. Both passed their youth upon the picturesque banks of the Maas, where wooded hills alternate with green meadows and sloping valleys, and here their art received its characteristic imprint. It is true that they could not yet take the decisive step of being exclusively landscape painters. As in the older genre painting, so in landscape the religious element was still preserved, and by its presence excused the innovation. Yet one feels that, although they paint biblical subjects, the heart of the painters was elsewhere. Even their choice of subjects is determined by the point of view of the landscape. St. Hubert, sinking on his knee before the wonderful stag, or the Vision of John at Patmos, the Flight into Egypt, and the Adoration of the Kings, are almost the only themes, because they give an excuse for depicting a rich woodland scene.

A particularly interesting painter is Hendrik met de Bles. Though his spindly, elongated figures are often mannered, his mannerism exercises an unusual charm. A painting by him at Antwerp is especially noteworthy because it portrays, in quite modern fashion, nature reduced to the service of man. In the foreground there is a lively street with rolling-mills, blast furnaces, and a smithy where labourers are hammering; behind this a cliff crowned by a castle, and in the distance the ocean enlivened with ships. A subordinate group of a man leading a horse upon which a woman with a child is sitting is all that indicates the subject of the picture: the *Flight into Egypt.*

Patinir, whom even Dürer had called "the good landscape painter," worked along the same lines except that he piled together more details, a partial result of his youthful enthusiasm. As the profession of a landscape painter was not yet acknowledged, it was considered necessary to make nature more interesting than reality by exaggeration of form and addition of detail; and it was supposed that more friends could be won for the cause if nature was exhibited in rich Sunday adornment. On the other hand, this tendency also reveals the same realistic trend and endeavour to be correct which had originated with Bouts. As the subjects were biblical, they sought to invent a suitable landscape, one different from what they saw about them. As no painter had yet gone to the Holy Land (this was not done until some years

later by Jan Scorel), they endeavoured to adorn fantastically the nature about them, and to compose imaginary landscapes from given Flemish motives. The luxuriant tree-tops, wide views of rivers, sand dunes, and horizons with the sea which they saw at home were enlarged, multiplied, and joined with abrupt, jagged cliffs and wild Alpine heights, under the impression that the painting thereby received a biblical and oriental imprint.

III. The Cologne School

As one can travel in a few hours from the Netherlands to Cologne, so the transition between the art of the two schools is almost imperceptible. Of many painters who were active in Cologne it is impossible to say whether they were natives or Netherlanders; the development of its art in both places from 1480 until 1510 is identical; leading from Roger through Memling to Quentin Massys and Lucas van Leyden, and ending

[1] Most of the paintings mentioned in this section are in the Cologne Gallery, where the school can be most satisfactorily studied. As the names of the painters are not generally known, they are usually called after their principal work with which critics first become acquainted. Among such works mentioned in this treatise, the Lyversberg *Passion*, the altar of Sts. George and Hippolytus, the *Glorification of Mary*, the *Holy Kinship*, and the *Death of Mary* are in the Cologne Gallery; and the Master of *St. Severin* derives his name from an altar in the church of that name at Cologne. The Masters of the *Life of Mary* and of *St. Bartholomew* are named after pictures in the Munich Gallery; while the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet is so called because this cabinet contains the greatest number of extant prints after his engravings.—Ed.

with the Italians. The first impulse of the painters of Cologne to desert the paths of Stephan Lochner was due to the influence of Roger van der Weyden. After his return from Italy Roger probably tarried in Cologne, and although the altar-piece of the Three Kings in the church of St. Columba is not by him, but by Memling, it is certain that relations existed between Roger and the principal city of the Rhine.

Without the great dramatic painter of Brussels the Master of the Lyversberg *Passion* is inconceivable. He relates his stories with crude directness, his favourite theme being martyrdoms in which rude soldiers assemble with brutal love of torture about the Redeemer. In like manner the Master of the altar of Saints George and Hippolytus endeavours to equal Roger in wild passion. Emaciated, angular figures, with sharp, almost caricatured, features jostle each other and push forward in the midst of bright landscapes, executed in Roger's style. For, as we have already seen, the influence of Roger did not last long. The final quarter of the fifteenth century—the age of Perugino and Bellini in Italy, and of Memling in the Netherlands—was a gentle lyric age. This trend of the century is also followed by the Cologne painters. As in southern Germany Schongauer developed from a sincere imitator of Roger into a sensitive lyric painter, the Cologne artists, instead of traversing further the paths of realism, returned to those of Lochner. Solemn

religious devotion and tender ecstasy take the place of crude pathos.

In the Master of the *Life of Mary* we can clearly follow the change. Only in his *Christ Crucified* does he endeavour to be pathetic like Roger; then Memling becomes his guide. As his *Adoration of the Kings* is a free copy of Lochner's altar-piece for the cathedral, so in his *Virgin in the Temple* there is a woman taken directly from that altar. Returning finally to Lochner, he created in the *Life of Mary*, to which he owes his name, a lovely idyl of a delicate, archaic character. The tender, maidenly figures in their slender, sensitive beauty, the simple and clinging ideal drapery, and the solemn golden background enveloping the figures—all show a return to the ideals of Stephan Lochner, which, in their dreamy beauty, were especially suited to the mystic, pious spirit of the time. The other themes which he treated are characteristic of the same spiritual tendency: like his Madonnas in bowers of roses, such as Master Wilhelm had already painted, maidenly, modest, sensitive and tender; or the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ*, full of a deep sustained grief and of that mild quietude which fears by a loud word or an eager gesture to disturb the holiness of the hour.

The Master of the *Glorification of Mary* is a more prosaic and sensible gentleman, and cannot therefore follow so unconditionally the new romantic and ecclesiastical tendencies. Although he retained the type of Stephan Lochner, it was without the latter's

sensibility and loveliness; and his visionary themes are painted with rustic clumsiness. The heaven radiates in golden splendour, but over landscapes representing, with dry objectivity, Rhenish scenery or panoramas of entire cities.

All the more delicate, almost like that of a Perugino of Cologne, is the sentiment of the Master of the *Holy Kinship*. The prevailing effect of his paintings is one of mild beauty and sentimental softness. Even when he occasionally depicts dramatic subjects, like the *Crucifixion* or the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, he does not leave the domain of soft elegiac sentiment. As he lived until 1509, it is not impossible that he may have seen paintings by Perugino; he occasionally paints palm-groves, which he could not have seen in the North. At all events, the similarity of expression of the elegiac spirit of the epoch in North and South is remarkable. Like Perugino, the Master of the *Holy Kinship* is not capable of depicting manly strength; like the Umbrian he avoids everything harsh and all dramatic action; and under his hands everything acquires the sentiment of "smiles amidst tears." A quiet peace and a gentle weariness is spread over nature.

It is certain that the Master of the *Death of Mary* visited Italy. Although a born Netherlander, he was active in Cologne and finally settled at Genoa. His development corresponds with this activity, beginning with Memling and later resembling Mabuse. In his

earlier paintings, women with tender, pale faces, and men with mild, soft features live in the midst of peaceful landscapes, over which the warm, even light of springtime is spread. As with Patinir, one gazes through portals in the cliffs upon moist and green declivities, and over the heights upon warm valleys and ancient ruins. He resembles Memling, as in his interiors, which are scenes of comfort and repose, so also in his aristocratic taste for costumes which, while almost coquettish, are yet quite free from detailed or overloaded adornment. When he visited Italy at a later period, his taste became even more clarified, uniting the grandeur of the Italian style with German sentiment.

Two other artists, who preceded the Master of the *Death of Mary*, are the most interesting of the entire group. For them also parallels can be found in the Netherlands; they would hardly have painted those rugged monumental figures had not Quentin Massys preceded them; and in case of the Master of *St. Severin*, the influence of Lucas van Leyden is also perceptible. They stand there, nevertheless, as strange figures and lonely spirits—a delight to him who seeks not the regular but the unusual.

What a bold and reckless talent is this of the Master of *St. Severin!* Without trace of the mild beauty of the Cologne masters, the figures stand gaudy and stiff, like the kings of playing-cards. Yet with the angularity of the primitives he combines a quite

modern psychological acuteness and an intensity of expression which no contemporary possessed. Instead of being satisfied with representing the maidenly or conventional in woman, he represents her as she is and has been made by life, with all the ugliness of deviating forms and with suffering or hardened features. And his men—what rugged figures are these ancients with the weather-beaten countenances, these apostles with heads of modern scholars! No other painter of the day has succeeded in rendering such well-executed, strikingly thoughtful physiognomies. The skulls are very high, and the forehead is boldly rounded, as in the case of chess-players; the eyes are set with heavy rings like those of people who have studied throughout the night; the lips are pale and drawn down as if in nervous exhaustion. Modest chin beards lengthen the bony countenance, which has an over-exerted and tired expression. In strange contrast with these spiritual heads are the damask mantles and brocaded clothes, the glittering crowns, sparkling sceptres, and swords. Even the treatment of the hair is individual. It does not seem natural, but sits like a wig upon the head, and the forehead is encircled by hairs stiff as a horse's mane. This strange combination—the reflective thoughtful heads and the mummeries of costume—creates the impression of standing before a primitive carnival or modern living pictures adapted to biblical scenes. One looks like a fantastic sea-king, another like Shakespeare's King Lear; here we are

reminded of Norwegian fables, there of Klinger and Eduard von Gebhardt. With this fantastic costume a strange and visionary colour-scheme is often united. In contrast to the hard and gaudy hues of his contemporaries, the pictures of this master often reveal flashing and gleaming, glimmering and sparkling effects, corresponding with the fabulous character of the representations. At the close of his life he achieved a statuesque grandeur which almost reminds of Signorelli. Nude *putti* play about the pillars; the colour is uniformly light and cool; the drapery falls in mighty folds and the line is solemn and reposeful. A great psychologist, a great painter of light, and one of the founders of the monumental style—such is his place of honour in the history of German art.

The Master of *St. Bartholomew* forms the logical conclusion of the artistic activity of the Cologne school. In its four hundred years of culture it had gone through all the stages of artistic experience from ecstatic mysticism to laughing worldliness and festal sublimity. The Master of *St. Bartholomew* appeared at the time when piety was changed into hysteric cant; when pleasure in colour was followed by weary abstention; and when art returned from a surfeit of expression to the style of mediæval sculpture, that it might by archaizing attain new and piquant charms. The sculptors of the age of Hadrian, who sought to express in the severe forms of primitive Greek art all the sensations of their own jaded epoch, and the paintings

of Carlo Crivelli, who at the close of the *quattrocento* resurrected Byzantinism, are the corresponding parallels—all sons of a dying culture which had spoiled its stomach for ordinary nourishment and found taste only in the pungent flavours of novelties.

It is hardly possible to enumerate all the elements to which the paradoxical, tasteless, and yet fascinating effect of the pictures of the Master of *St. Bartholomew* is due. Like living figures of sandstone in rigid, statuesque repose, his saints stand before us, their cold limbs clothed in the most magnificent vestments Pearl diadems are woven into the luxuriant reddish blond hair of the women, and dragons, looking strange as enchanted human beings, accompany them. *Putti* in the Italian style flutter in the air; rich brocaded carpets hang behind the figures, over which the eye glides to bright, grey-green plains and gleaming blue hills. A strange contrast to this modern feeling for nature is afforded by his Baroque ornamentation and the Gothic architecture seemingly chiselled by a goldsmith's hand, and also between the precious gleaming accessories and the cold neurasthenic colour of the remainder: a sallow, yellow carnation imparting to the figures a corpselike and half-decayed appearance, and the pale tones of the green, yellow, and grey clothing. But most fascinating of all is the overrefined sentiment and the affected grace of movement. One thinks at the same time of the most ancient and the most modern painting; of the sandstone figures

arising so solemnly on the pillars of Gothic cathedrals and of Fernand Khnopff's *Sphinx* grinning perversely as a stony archangel clutches her brow. But Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, and that pale woman of the Lichtenstein Gallery with the cold almond-shaped eyes, also come to mind. As in both cases it was the sphinxlike, enigmatic, and uncanny that tempted Leonardo, so a similar thought seems to have hovered before the Master of *St. Bartholomew* when he created those female heads, which with their broad brows, thin eyebrows, and cruel cheekbones seem caricatures of saints. Their little mouths with the teasing dimple are full of desire, as if pouting for a kiss; affectedly they bend and stretch their bony, pointed fingers, and draw back the thin bloodless lips as though they were laughing over some doubtful remark which the saint opposite them had just whispered. At the same time, it will be remembered, Cologne was the home of the obscurantists, a brood of stealthy hypocrites who during the day knelt before the pictures of saints, in order that they might in the night celebrate the secret orgies of the black mass. The same tendency in art seems to be expressed in the infernal, satanic element of these paintings.

Along with Cologne, Mayence appears to have been a principal seat of artistic activity at the close of the century. Here also there lived an artist who has much to say to us moderns; an artist as rich in chivalric grace as in individual romanticism: the sympathetic

unknown Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet. He had long been known as a line-engraver, in which technique he reminds one of Rops, when he shows woman as the ruler of the universe, making a beast of the greatest philosopher and causing the most pious king to grovel in the dust before idols. There are indications of Schwind and Böcklin when he depicts wild men and nude young women dashing across the moor upon a unicorn or a hart. The sentiment of a northern ballad pervades the gloomy print representing a young man festally crowned with grape leaves in his curly hair, glancing over the glowing meadow, while Death, not the usual skeleton but an old man with withered body and tired, pitiful features, suddenly blocks his way and looks him long and deeply in the eye. Yet this same brooder also observed life with a quick eye, and painted quarrelsome peasants, ragged tramps, and half-starved village musicians with the acuteness of a Rembrandt. Even more did the aristocratic world, with its elegance and chivalric strain, find in him a knightly poet. He has depicted tourneys, stag and falcon hunts: crashing trumpets sound, horses neigh, dogs bark, and the startled game runs gracefully away. He has succeeded quite as well with the sweet game of love. What tender, unspeakably lovely little prints are those in which the young gallant sits, sedately chatting with his sweetheart, while about them roses, tulips, and flowers of all kinds are budding and filling the air with perfume.

Whether it is by accident or because a real relation existed between them, one cannot examine the works of the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet without thinking of Leonardo. Did he wander to upper Italy from Constance, where he remained for a time, or did he in some other way learn of the enigmatic genius who was at that time revealing new beauty to the South? At all events, his charm and his delicate feeling for beauty resemble the Italian as much as they are unlike the German art of the period. His slender youths with elastic, yet soft and sensual bodies; the modest delicacy of his young women; their luxuriant locks framing the face with soft ringlets, their dreamy, softly sensual eyes and the expression of ineffable sweetness which transfigures their faces—only in the drawings of Leonardo are similar things found. In his pictures, also, which have lately become known, he is recognisable by the coquettish costume, the charming types, and the delight in wreaths and flowers. His portrait of two lovers (Gotha) is probably the most beautiful of all old German portraits. This fine, fashionable youth with his long, fair hair crowned with wild roses, and this bashful maiden with the rose in her hand, listening so dreamily to the languishing whispers of her lover, are graceful to their fingertips, even for a modern eye. A ray of the blessedness of the women sung by Walther von der Vogelweide, and also a ray of southern sunlight, has fallen upon this delightful work.

IV. Dürer

In southern Germany Nuremberg remained the centre of artistic activity. Like Wackenroder and Tieck a hundred years ago, the traveller is still strangely moved in treading the streets of the ancient city on the Pegnitz. The venerable churches, the uneven streets, and the solemn patrician houses seem still peopled with picturesque figures in the quaint caps and head-dresses of that great period when Nuremberg was "the crowded school of the fatherland's art," when an overflowing spirit of art flourished within its walls, and when the masters Hans Sachs, Adam Kraft, Peter Vischer, Albrecht Dürer, and Willibald Pirkheimer were alive.

True, there is still much Romanticism in this enthusiasm. How trivial and philistine seems the development of German art compared with its mighty progress in the Italian republics! Maximilian, the last of the knights, gave all manner of commissions, but in his chronic financial need he was unable to pay the artists. Although Cardinal Albrecht of Mayence had the high ideals of an Italian Mæcenas, the troubles of the Reformation prevented him from carrying out his plans. How small and poor do the commissions of the Fuggers, the Imhoffs, and the Holzschubers appear in comparison with those of the Medici, the Tornabuoni and the Pazzi! German art would have remained a craft, and confined itself to imparting religious instruction by means of altar-pieces, if the artists themselves had not sought and found the means

of raising themselves on the wings of genius above the age and the world.

Dürer, especially, owes his splendid achievements not to his fatherland, but to himself alone. Only in the works which were no commission, in which as a poet he stands outside of the public, is he free and great. That which really makes him a classic is to be found not in his paintings, but in his wood and copper engravings. In recognising the specific value of engraving and making it technically capable of conquering the entire domain of fantasy, he loosed not only his own but the age's tongue. In these arts he appears in the fulness of his genius, and reveals the "collected secret treasure of his heart." The germs of the creations of Cornelius, Ludwig Richter, Schwind, and Böcklin in our own day, lie in the works of Dürer, the most profound and powerful painter-poet recorded in the history of art.

The fact that his career began with the *Apocalypse*, the representation of wild, fantastic ideas hardly possible to express in art, is characteristic for the tendency of his genius. In his hands even that which is contrary to nature found organic presentation. Like an uncanny dream, like a ghostly face, the gnostic vision passes before our eyes. But at the same time that he was labouring with the *Apocalypse*, the *Life of Mary* took shape in his mind; and the dæmonic artist of the world of revelation transformed himself into a refined, soulful story-teller, whose pleasant idyls, woven out of German

country life, German houses, and German furniture, made the life of the Mother of God as simple and intelligible as that of a woman of old Nuremberg. He is equally celebrated as the poet of the story of Christ. Even before Luther had thought of his translation of the Bible, Dürer had translated the gospel for his people and had made the Roman-Asiatic types of Christianity homelike and familiar to the German people.

While in the popular technique of wood engraving he treated simple themes comprehensible to the people, his line engraving reveals an aristocrat and a humourist. One thinks of Schwind, when Dürer tells of St. Genevieve, St. Hubert, and all tthose weather-beaten hermits living with the deer and the squirrels in the midst of the German forest ; of Böcklin in his *Rape of Amyone*, or the *Abduction upon the Unicorn*—those antique prints pervaded by the magic breath of fable, in which the clear spirit of Hellenism is so strangely united with northern sentiment. His *Nemesis*, the *Knight with Death and the Devil*, *St. Jerome*, and *Melancholy* are world-known examples of Dürer's profound, struggling art. Like the deep furrows in the countenance of *Melancholy*, this brooding woman, his art is deep and serious; revealing the struggles of a mighty spirit in an enigmatic, unfathomable world, in which the vibrating thoughts of a great genius labour.

Lest one should think Dürer was only a brooder, a reticent and unapproachable spirit, one has only to

read his letters, pervaded by the same crude and homely humour as Luther's *Table Talk*. One has only to glance at his marginal drawings for Maximilian's *Prayer-book* to observe that this serious man could also laugh mischievously, and that this philosopher was a convivial and joyful being. This universality is the extraordinary thing about Dürer's nature. Although a poet who was seemingly quite lost in the world of ideas, he was at the same time an observer to whose sharp eye the wide world was revealed. The Munich portrait alone shows the thinker, the visionary, and the brooding spirit whose art furnished four centuries with profound enigmas to solve. In the others, painted at an earlier period, he is a bold and joyful young man, who, like Rembrandt, takes childish pleasure in a pretty jacket, a coquettish cap or a handsome garment. As an artist he is just such a *mixtum compositum* of the most diverging elements. The same man who could be so brooding and abstract had also a sense for everything that concerned the world; and far from living away from it, he created works which made him the forerunner of the "intimate" art of the following century. His simple drawings of popular life assure him first place by the side of Quentin Massys among the pioneers of genre painting. His studies of animals did not find their counterparts in painting until Rembrandt's *Carcass of an Ox* a hundred and twenty years later; his studies of plants and flowers are pages from the book of that impartial realism which

passes all boundaries of time. Pansies, columbines, meadow grass, bindweed, plantains, violets, and dandelion—he draws them all with such astonishing grace that his aquarelles might belong to the present instead of the sixteenth century, and to a Japanese artist as well as to Dürer. In like manner all his landscape drawings pass chronological bounds; they might just as well have originated in the circle of the most modern of artists, the Impressionists. If in any respect at all he was in advance of his time it was as a landscape painter; for he accomplished what the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet had attempted, and prepared the way for that which Elsheimer, and, after him, only the present age again attained.

But Dürer did not confine himself to observing nature with an impartial eye; he wished also to ascertain the laws governing her appearance. Beside the poet stands not only the realist, but also the investigator, the scholar, and the theorist. Heretofore northern artists had proceeded in a purely empirical manner. Trusting entirely to the eye, they were correct when they saw correctly, but erroneous when their vision deceived them. Dürer was the first to proceed as the Italians had done from empiricism to knowledge; and through the learned works written at the close of his life, he created for Germany the scientific basis which Alberti and Leonardo had furnished the Italians.

As for Leonardo, so also for Dürer painting was only a form of expression used occasionally when no other

thoughts filled his mind. Even with the palette in hand, he remained a brooder. If those only are to be considered painters who afford delight by the harmony and beauty of their colour, Dürer can hardly so be considered. His works are entirely lacking in colour sense; gaudy and hard, rather written than painted, they afford little pleasure to the eye used to colour effects. Just as in his graphic works art signifies nothing more to him than a form of speech for the expression of thought, so when he labours with the brush, he is occupied more with spiritual or formal than specifically pictorial problems.

The psychological problem most interested him in the many portraits which he painted from the days of his apprenticeship to the last years of his life. Aside from the portraits of princes, those of Frederick the Wise and the Emperor Maximilian, and of a few councillors of Nuremberg and merchants of Augsburg, he was seldom occupied with commissions. He painted only those who were related to him in mind or in heart or who seemed to afford an interesting psychological study. Like Rembrandt, he practised upon himself; he portrayed his father, the hearty old goldsmith, and the thin and hollow-eyed countenance of his brother, the tailor Hans; painted Michel Wohlgemuth, his aged master, and created in Holzschuher the type of a whole generation; that rugged and warlike race, whose king was Luther and who effected the Reformation. From the purely pictorial standpoint his

portraits are examples of the same miniature paintings which prevailed in the Netherlands in the days of Jan van Eyck. Every wrinkle, hair, furrow, and vein is depicted with documentary fidelity. While in Holbein's drawings the lightest pen stroke is applied like a brush mark, Dürer paints as if he were making pen strokes with a brush. While Holbein, in great, sure lines, seizes upon that which is lifelike in appearance, Dürer does not progress beyond laborious efforts, and seeks by the addition of details to establish the sum of character expressed in a head. But whatever is lacking in facility or workmanship is atoned for by his intellectual greatness. Just because he so far surpassed in intellect the dashing and brutal Holbein, the latter's portraits, notwithstanding their skilfulness of technique, seem like photographs alongside of Dürer's characteristic, spiritual heads. There the cold analyst reflecting the exterior of his subject with the infallible certainty of the camera obscura; here the brooder and thinker, who lends to his sitters something of his own Faust-like nature.

In his religious pictures Dürer was dominated partly by psychological, partly by formal problems; and the very fact that he made such problems the starting point raises him above his surroundings. All artists before him in Germany felt themselves artisans, and fulfilled each commission as well as they could without higher ambition. Dürer was the first to raise art above the handicraft and to feel himself

PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF

Prado, Madrid

an artist; he created not because he received commissions, but because a power within him cried out for expression; he put his whole soul into his works, and had the feeling that he was working for eternity. Italy had shown him how great was the difference between handicraft and art.

When his activity began, the rigid and constrained style of Michel Wohlgemuth dominated the artistic life of Nuremberg. Dürer lingered in his workshop, but only like the king's son in the fable who, losing his way, had wandered into the charcoal-burners' hut. As soon as his apprenticeship was over, he dissolved the bonds which had connected him with the school of Wohlgemuth, and chose masters who were spiritually nearer to him. His first mentor, as is shown by the small Madonna of the Cologne Museum, was Schongauer. Then he disappears for a time from view. For if the altar-piece at Meissen and the *Flora* of the Frankfort Museum be assigned to this period, it would mean that during his youth Dürer had adopted the manner of Jan Scorel as well as that of Bartolommeo da Venezia with quite astonishing surety. We do not stand upon sure ground until his next works, inspired by Mantegna.

Upon his arrival at Venice in 1494, Mantegna's prints, of which he had copied two, opened his view into a new world. To this great master he did homage in his first altar-pieces; almost as an imitator in the small Dresden altar-piece and more independent in his *Bewailing of the Body of Christ*, which even in

subject is connected with the Paduan school. In the Nuremberg as well as the Munich work, there is no loose juxtaposition as in Wohlgemuth's painting, but a rigid composition. In the latter's work the tough metallic tone, the stony grief-stricken appearance of Mary, and the pathos of the old toothless woman raising her arms with a wild cry of grief show how much Mantegna's style and figures dominated Dürer's thoughts.

When he developed from the creator of the *Apocalypse* into the poet of the *Life of Mary*, these Paduan elements were relegated to the background, and the painter of pathos became an idyllic artist. In the *Birth of Christ* in the Munich Gallery as well as the *Adoration of the Kings* at Florence, the Holy Family is placed in a ruin, full of corners and affording all kinds of interior and exterior views. Mary, with her fair hair protruding from a white head-dress, is the youthful and pretty Nuremberg maiden of the *Life of Mary*. Instead of harsh and emotional, he is quiet and mild—a transition from Mantegna to Bellini.

His development is the same that the art of Venice experienced at the beginning of the sixteenth century. When Dürer lived at Venice in 1494, the chief paintings which he saw in the churches were the products of the school of Murano, and of Giovanni Bellini, both inspired by Mantegna. But when he returned to Venice, in 1506, Bellini had adopted his soft and harmonious style. The people thronged before his altar-pieces, and

Dürer also experienced the same change in taste. "The thing which so well pleased me eleven years ago does not at all please me now": in this passage of his letters he announces that for him also the Muranese were a thing of the past, and that he no longer considered Alvise Vivarini but Bellini as the greatest artist of Venice.

The *Festival of the Rosary* now in the Rudolphinum at Prague is the principal evidence of his admiration for Bellini. As he himself had softened under the blue Venetian sky, so his art lost its rigidity and constraint. A soft, lyric tone, a rhythmic line, and something lovely even in his colour betrays that while painting the picture he was looking not at the crisp and pointed gables of northern houses but into the quiet watery mirror of the lagoons. The *Madonna with the Goldfinch* also, although characteristically done, would have been no strange note in the midst of the full round tones of Bellini and Cima. Even the nude entered into his studies; and the delicate miniature-like *Christ Crucified*, at Dresden, shows that the art of Antonello had touched a sympathetic cord.

In addition to this Verrocchio also impressed him. For many of his line engravings, like the *Knight with Death and the Devil*, the *Little Horse*, and *St. George*, were evidently conceived under the influence of the Colleoni monument which had recently been erected in Venice. In another direction he was inspired by

Leonardo, whom he met in Bologna.[1] The content of Dürer's *Christ Disputing with the Doctors* (Barberini Palace, Rome) is derived from the painting ascribed to Leonardo in the National Gallery (London); it belongs, with Titian's *Tribute Money*, to that series of works which were created under the inspiration of Leonardo and treat the problem of characteristic heads, using the hands as a psychological commentary. From the tender smile playing about the portrait of a *Young Woman* in the Museum at Berlin and the *Female Head* in charcoal drawing of the Louvre, as well as from the "crazy coutnenances" which Dürer was so fond of drawing, it is evident that the caricatures of Leonardo pleased his brooding spirit.

The further development of Dürer after his return home in 1507 is vacillating. Although his angular late Gothic taste sometimes appears, he endeavoured, wherever the theme permitted, to attain rhythmic, graceful movement and unity of composition; and while he never thought of casting aside his own sentiment in favour of a strange one, he is nevertheless conscious that realism is not necessarily identical with monstrosity and abnormal ugliness.

It is quite characteristic that immediately after his return from Italy he painted the life-size figures of *Adam* and *Eve*, now in Madrid. Although both are thoroughly German in conception, he would not have

[1] It is usually assumed, in the absence of conclusive favorable evidence, that no such meeting took place at Bologna.—Ed.

painted them had he never been in Italy; for his pleasure in the nude and the rhythm which he endeavours to attain in both figures are thoroughly Italian. The same figures of the Ghent altar-piece are rigid and angular, creating the impression that Jan van Eyck had seen only nude, northern models without bodily charm. In contrast to this coarse-grained ugliness there is free and rhythmic line with Dürer. In contrast to the pure planimetric contours, filled with colour, of former German art, he endeavours, in the sense of Verrocchio, to give the figures bodily roundness and to create effective contrasts in movement. As a pupil of Leonardo he is no less occupied with psychological analysis. Adam longingly opens his lips, and a quiet smile—Flaubert's *"Oh si tu voulais!"*—plays about Eve's lips.

In his next work, the *Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand*, painted for Frederick the Wise, and now in the Vienna Gallery, he falls back upon the realism which had previously dominated German art; but in the Heller altar-piece he reapproaches the aim that since his Italian journey had hovered before him. The groups of the apostles are simply and carefully composed, and in place of contemporary costume he has adpoted simple, ideal draperies, the studies for which might well be confounded with similar studies by Leonardo. He also shares with Leonardo the quality of avoiding undue emphasis upon the formal. Although the soles of the feet and the hands are drawn with the

assiduous exactitude of the primitives, he remained a psychologist in the manner in which he makes his portrait heads types of character.

In the *Trinity* of the Vienna Gallery (1511) he has attained the exact opposite of the style of Wohlgemuth. Where in the latter's works one sees the wrinkled folds of wood statuary, Dürer's draperies are simple in arrangement and graceful in movement. In his own portrait, which he has introduced into the background, he no longer wears the costume of the day, but a long and simple cloak. Where Wohlgemuth shows a confused conglomeration, with Dürer a solemn eurythmy of line prevails. In contrast to the older German form of an altar with wings, Dürer, in the manner of the *quattrocento*, has united the picture in a single frame rounded at the top.

Several other works which originated in the following years (both Madonnas and subjects like the *Lucretia* at Munich) contained nothing new. The only interesting point is how the recollection of the mosaics of St. Mark's lives in his memory. Not only in the Munich portrait of himself, in that of Charles the Great at Frankfort, and his powerful woodcut the *Head of Christ*, but in several Madonnas, he has returned to the Byzantine tradition of full face; in order, no doubt, to attain solemn and monumental effects.

Not until the close of his life was he able to unite

in a single great work the result of all his efforts. His journey to the Netherlands in 1520–21 furnished a new incentive to the imposing simplification of his art. He saw the paintings of Quentin Massys with their powerful life-sized figures, and the altar-piece of Ghent. "That is a delightful, comprehensible painting, and especially Mary and God the Father are excellent": this passage of his diary shows the path he afterwards followed. As at the same time the young artists of Florence studied no longer Gozzoli and Pisanello but the works of Masaccio in the Brancacci Chapel, so Dürer no longer admired the miniature painting of Jan, but the powerful figures of Hubert van Eyck with their solemn and mighty draperies, thus approaching the same style which the artists of the sixteenth century learned from Masaccio. Several wood engravings enable us to follow the problem as it ripened in his mind. Simple and lonely figures, impressively conceived and executed, take the place of the charming beings which had formerly lived so modestly in delightful landscapes.

But the greatest revelation is in his mighty series of the *Four Apostles*, of 1526, long in the Rathaus of Nuremberg, but now in the Munich Pinakothek. According to ancient tradition, the "Four Temperaments" are represented; and the fact that the series was thus explained shows how much real temperament and character reposes in each one of these Titans. Like Leonardo, Dürer followed a double aim. He was

probably attracted by the problem of characteristic heads; the saints formerly pious and contemplative, become meditative and thoughtful men. On the other hand, as in the case of Leonardo, the psychological are accompanied by formal tendencies. The powerful characterisation of the heads corresponds with the statuesque character of the bodies; and in this combination of psychic power with monumental grandeur, the *Four Apostles* are something unique in the history of art. Although similar figures occur in the altarpieces of Giovanni Bellini, Cima, and Mantegna, they lack this formal simplicity and majestic, statuesque repose. Others, like Fra Bartolommeo at a later period, do not possess the spiritual grandeur; their mantles no longer invest a thinker but are hung according to academic rules over hollow lay figures. Albrecht Dürer, like Leonardo, solved the problem of uniting the deepest intellectual content with formal beauty and psychic grandeur.

V. Franconia and Bavaria

In the midst of his time Dürer stands like a giant, his feet rooted in the earth but his head reaching to the stars. A monument dedicated to German art of the period of the Reformation would have a colossal statue of Dürer as its central figure; all the others would sit as figurines in sockets at the foot of the monument. Although they are indeed lovable and sympathetic

SAINTS PAUL AND MARK
Munich Gallery

men, the name Little Masters, which is applied to them, characterises their relation to Dürer. Following the all-embracing colossal genius who had dominated reality as well as dreamland, came the *diadochi* who divided his world-empire, ruling their little principalities as well as they might.

Some, inspired by the humanistic movement, devoted themselves eagerly to the antique legend, others to depicting the culture of the epoch. They wandered about the yearly fairs and markets among the peasants and burghers, revealing the scenes of popular life with primeval crudity. The picturesque figures of weather-beaten lansquenets, market women, maidens and distinguished ladies, peasants, young dandies and aged noblemen, kirmesses, weddings, and banquets—such figures and scenes defile past us in their prints.

But it was not only in the graphic arts that this development took place. The achievements of painting signify less an advance than a retrogression into the old craftsman's ways. There was neither emperor, nobility nor bourgeoisie with appreciation for the problems which Dürer proposed; and when later, on account of the Reformation, German intellectual life adopted a petty trend and lost itself in dreary and colourless quarrels, the tender flower of art must have frozen in this icy atmosphere.

Hans Süss of Kulmbach is a mild and pleasing master, much like a descendant through a feminine collateral line from Dürer's harsh and manly art.

Hans Schäufeieln, the illustrator of *Herr Thuerdank*, fulfilled honestly, as might have been expected from a master-painter of Nördlingen, his numerous commissions. Barthel Beham, who had visited Italy, loved to fill the backgrounds of his paintings with rich Renaissance buildings. Anton Woensam of Cologne, untouched by the Renaissance, expressed himself in exaggerated late Gothic forms; with the archaic harshness which forms the characteristic feature of his works, he combines Baroque gesture with wrinkled, puffed draperies.

When speaking of German art one longs to hear the rustling of the German woods, to breath the fragrance of their ozone, and see nymphs and wood-sprites roving through the thicket. Faithfulness, inwardness, and an appreciation of the spirit of the wood seem to us characteristic of German art. We think of hermits sitting, oblivious of the world, before their caves; of green meadows and flower-strewn hills; of gloomy woodland slopes and pleasing valleys through which shimmering waters ripple. The fresh ray of the morning sun breaks through the light green of the young birches, and leaping from branch to branch changes into diamonds the gleaming dewdrops, and into gold or precious stones the beetle comfortably crawling in the soft moss.

> "Da gehet leise, nach seiner Weise
> Der liebe Herrgott durch den Wald."

Because these things are found with Schwind and

Thoma, they seem the most characteristically German among modern artists; and for the same reason, among the older artists Altdorfer stands nearest to us.

He was a lovable, truly German master, whose pictures are redolent of pine forests, and in their sleepiness and cosy sentiment strike a confidential and homelike chord within us. He began as a miniature painter. At the close of the fifteenth century Berthold Furtmeyer, who also lived in Regensburg, painted fragrant mountain ranges and the play of sunlight with fine feeling. Altdorfer was the first among the Germans to apply the delicacy of miniature to panel painting. His little pictures, therefore, seem curiously out of place in German painting of the sixteenth century, which still saw its chief task in proclaiming in large altar-pieces the doctrine of Christian salvation. But Altdorfer did not labour for the church. For miniature painting had since the days of Gutenberg become an aristocratic luxury; and Altdorfer, as a painter for amateurs, produced not altar but little cabinet pieces, intended not for religious edification but for artistic enjoyment. It is for this reason that one so gladly lingers before his works. As he laboured for the aristocrats of taste, he could go so far in advance of his time that many of his pictures, in their freshness of conception and sparkling colour, affect us like forerunners of the most modern painting.

In a classification of his works in accordance with the problems attempted, the first group would be

formed of those in which architectural features are combined with landscape. For Altdorfer was not only a painter but city architect of Regensburg as well; and he enthusiastically adopted all architectural and ornamental forms which at that time were introduced from Italy into Germany. He therefore inserts into his picture representing the *Flight of the Holy Family into Egypt* a splendid fountain, which might well adorn the court of a Renaissance palace. For the same reason the scene of *Susanna's Bath* is laid in the neighbourhood of a great palace, which in its gay splendour surpasses all the fantastic designs of contemporary German architects.

The second group is composed of panoramic views over broad plains, of which the Berlin picture illustrating *Beggary sitting upon the Train of Arrogance* is the most striking example. A princely pair, upon whose trailing mantles a family of beggars sits, makes brilliant entry into a Renaissance palace, which is balanced to the right of the painting by a dark mass of foliage; and between the two the eye sweeps over a hilly country upon habitations, streams, and castles. Altdorfer therefore uses the same artistic device which Piero della Francesca had applied before and Claude Lorrain adopted after him. By painting dark curtains in the foreground, he achieves the possibility of making the distance appear lighter and more spacious.

To the third group belong the pictures in which, progressing in the paths of Gerard David, he attempted

to interpret certain effects of light. In his *Crucifixion* the heaven is veiled with dark, curiously coloured clouds, through which gloomy lighting he endeavours to render the sad parting feeling of the hour. In his *Assumption of Mary* the whole heaven is bathed in a fiery purple, as if a gleaming world of joy and magnificence were opened. Through the same skilful handling of light, he even succeeded in transforming in an artistic sense the most tiresome commission which he had received, *Alexander's Victory*. While the other battle-pieces at that time ordered from Bavarian artists by Duke William IV. and now united in the Munich Pinakothek do not rise above the character of coloured wood-cuts, Altdorfer spread a bright morning light over the sea, the hills, and the battle-field, playing in reddish gleam upon the pinnacles of the castle and leaving the other parts of the landscape in gloomy shadow. Armour, uniforms, and banners flash and sparkle in the sunlight. Not until the seventeenth century did another German, Adam Elsheimer, paint the action of light in an equally delicate manner.

But his most beautiful paintings are those which conduct us into the depths of the German forest. His name need only to be mentioned to remind us of the woodland, where sunbeams dance upon the tree-trunks, hermits sit beside their caves, or woodland gods repose upon green moss. No one before him had painted real woodland life. While all others had

remaine at the entrance of the wood, Altdorfer was the first to plunge, like a miner, into the green shaft. The branches of the trees closed over him and the blue heaven disappeared; but he saw the sunbeams rustling through the green leaves and the moss spread like a velvet mantle upon the earth.

Even to his drawings, wood-cuts and etchings his delight in the German forest gives a unique charm. While Dürer in his marginal drawings on Maximilian's *Prayer-book* confined himself to clever scroll-work, Altdorfer sought by his trees, branches, and foliage to transport the reader into the silence of the forest. In the *Triumphal Procession of Maximilian* his prints, the *Train of Prisoners*, may be recognised by the German pine woods forming the background. However different the content of his etchings may be, a tall and splendid tree, whether fir or pine, is added as though it were the artist's monogram. The thick foliage and the heavy hanging branches of the pine, the thread-like roots, and the half-dried creepers winding about an ancient wall are more attractive to him than a biblical or legendary theme.

In pictures of this kind the figures are a matter of indifference; one only observes the woodland landscape enclosing them. Here in a green cave a family of satyrs has nested; there the wild solitude of the forest moves Jerome's heart to repentance; or St. George, riding through a beech forest, has met the dragon. Neither the heaven nor the treetops,

but only the foliage is visible. For the first time in the history of art the depth of the forest, as in our own days Diaz painted it, was revealed. Finally Altdorfer, to crown his life work, painted a picture which was a pure landscape, without any figures. Hanging, like his *St. George*, in the Munich Pinakothek, this earliest German landscape shows a simple bit of nature, depicted with the faithfulness of portraiture. Here all time limits are obscured, and one seems to gaze upon the works of a modern painter—a deep, blue sky rising above a green clump of trees; a little lake, a narrow footpath winding over the meadow, a bluish mountain and a few houses—such is the content of this painting. All that had previously originated in this domain had maintained at least an external connection with religious painting; and when the landscape at first timidly appeared in altar-pieces, in order to have a justification for its existence it retained, even at a later period, the biblical figures. Even Patinir uses nature as a mere foil for the religious subjects; and although in his aquarelles Dürer had rendered independent landscapes, in panel paintings he did not venture to break with tradition. Altdorfer did, and through this he became the precursor of the great landscape painters of the following century.

Even in the sixteenth century he was followed, although timidly, by a few other masters. Augustine Hirschvogel and Hans Sebald Lantensack are known as etchers of spirited, quite modern prints, while

Michael Ostendorfer attempted by light effects to impart sentiment to his pictures. Since his *St. George* of the Marcuard collection has become known, Melchior Feselen of Ingolstadt appears as one of the most interesting painters of the epoch. For this picture, with its Marée horse, its Nickelmann dragon, and its Corot tree, combined with the delightful cosiness and story-telling sentiment of the whole, is a fine example of childish and hearty German fantasy.

Even to Cranach one can only be just in the presence of his "intimate" paintings. The other works, which during his lifetime brought him fame and reputation, have now but little to say to us. However often he painted the spiritual heroes of the sixteenth century his portraits of Luther reveal nothing of the warm-hearted temperament of the reformer, as little as those of Melanchthon disclose the thoughtful delicacy of the scholar. They are simply great men seen through the temperament of a philistine. The dogmatising altar-pieces which serve as professions of his Protestant faith have only a didactic, even schoolmasterly effect; they are learned treatises, as different from former pictures as an intelligible and naturalistic Protestant sermon differs from the poetic lyricism of the Gospels; as a whitewashed Protestant church from a mighty cathedral gleaming in the splendour of tapers and flooded with the notes of the organ. But he is most distressing of all when attempting to play the academician and to render life-sized figures: the greater the

size, the more awful the void. There are half-length pictures of Judith with red Rembrandtesque hats, showing with droll smiles a sword and a pewter bowl containing a decapitated head; there are full-length women wearing heavy golden necklaces, who when escorted by a Cupid are called Venus, or when sentimentally thrusting a dagger into their breasts are characterised as Lucretia. Everything is weak and schematic in drawing and affected in sentiment.

But when upon the point of turning from Cranach as a dry pedant, an empty exaggerator or an aged talker, one suddenly discovers that the same man has painted pictures which, in their honest inwardness and simple thoughtfulness belong to the most delightful products of German life. Among these are the delicate yellow-haired Madonnas which fill one with such homelike pleasure in foreign collections—as when in the midst of fiery Romanic eyes the clear, faithful glance of a German eye meets us; or when in foreign climes the ear unexpectedly catches a simple German folk-song, sung with untrained voice but hearty feeling. Among these paintings, also, are his mischievous panels of the *Fountain of Youth*, in which old hags climbing into the water basin appear upon the other side as dainty maidens. Here also belong his pictures of Bathsheba, which are so Teutonic, and so simple and hearty in the manner in which the biblical bath scene with the lustful old men is transformed into an innocent foot-bath. A piece of Germany as our

grandfathers knew it lives in these ancient village humours,—as when on a sunny Sunday morning they wandered through the flowering gardens and uneven lanes of an old German town, where fair maidens, looking down from oriel windows, sleepily combed their hair. Is there anything more dainty than Cranach's fresh pictures of antique life, in which, however, the nymphs of German romance and the wild men of our woodland tales move and live? Far from the philosophic brooding of Dürer transposing the profound thoughts of a Faust into the antique world, or from the cold, clear correctness which at a later day prevailed, Cranach treats antique legends like romantic stories of the age of chivalry, with the same childishness that charms us in Thoma. Unspeakably comic is the gentleman with broad, well-kept beard of the formal cut of a Saxon elector, who at one time appears as a satyr, at another as Paris or Apollo. And the little maidens with the slight budlike forms, and delicate but firm limbs, and with the golden chains and red hats, associated in such an innocent manner with Eve's costume, are surely charming. Whether they appear as coy forest queens daintily sitting on a stag's back, as nymphs reposing beside a rippling brook, or as Venus, Minerva or Juno in company with the gentleman of the Saxon beard aforesaid—we have the German sentiment of story undisturbed by a single academic trait.

It is the spicy woodland landscape that gives to these paintings their indescribable charm. Works like the

Flight into Egypt have an odour of pine forest and a Christmas poetry which even Altdorfer did not attain. While the latter depicted the German forest, Cranach discovered the soul of the forest—the fairy story. Sometimes it even seems as if the toadstool was about to change into a gnome, the knotted branches of a tree into old Rübezahl,[1] or the clouds into elves. For all these beings are not placed arbitrarily in nature. As the insect procures its whole existence, and even acquires its form and colour, from the plant upon which it lives, so Cranach's beings, enchanted by the magic of the wood, seem an integral part of the thicket. Gnarled stumps, misshapen as the alum root, arise; thick creepers, knotted roots, moss and ferns spread out; and in the midst of this woodland nature, in its rugged castles, dwell the inhabitants of the wood. Their calloused fingers are knotted branches, their wrinkled skin is the burst bark of a tree, their beards resemble that clinging moss which in the autumn hangs upon old trees. The denizens of the forest, stags, roes, squirrels, and wildcats, are their comrades. It was a fatality for Cranach that in the learned and courtly surroundings of Wittenberg he was so often compelled to labour against the trend of his talents. In these simple pictures of fable he is the most German of Germans. One loves to think of him sitting in his drug shop beside the heavy pigskin folios, brewing the herbs of the German forest into wonderful elixirs. There is a

[1] A mountain demon of the Riesengebirge.—Ed.

certain relation between his art and the pharmacy; for he and Spitzwerg, the two apothecaries in the history of art, are also most closely related as artists.

VI. Alsace and Suabia

Matthias Grünewald, whose *Conversion of Mauritius* hangs beside Cranach's *Lucrezia* in Munich, again leads us to the southern soil. Not untruly does Sandrart, the acute connoisseur, call him the German Correggio. In sentiment, indeed, he has little in common with the painter of Parma; his cruel naturalism, his delight in suffering and dæmonic fantasy found a counterpart neither in Correggio nor in any other Italian master; but in a colouristic sense the characterisation is accurate. For Grünewald's relation to the school of Dürer resembles Correggio's to the school of Rome. In the circumstance that neither prints from wood-cuts nor from line engravings by him exist, the difference is expressed. While other German artists preferred the burin to the brush and gave their paintings the character of large coloured prints, Grünewald thought in a pictorial manner, and felt his power only in uniting bright, glowing colours in powerful harmonies. In his paintings there are no sharp outlines or architectonic composition, but dissolving masses of colour and a magic chiaroscuro enveloping the scene with a subtle charm. In pathos also he is characteristically German, far deeper than the Romanic artists, although

certain shades of his sentiment remind one of Correggio. A certain dreamy, sensuous tendency lends to his Madonna at Colmar an almost North Italian character.

When Sandrart[1] characterised him as the German Correggio, he had, without knowing it, correctly determined the artistic origin of Grünewald. Correggio and Grünewald have sprung from the same source: their spiritual father is Leonardo. While it is not certain that Grünewald visited Italy, it must be remembered that even to-day many a journey made by a young artist is not immediately recorded by a reporter. In all of his pictures Grünewald used a kind of heraldic, late Gothic decoration—never antique ornaments, columns or pillars as he would have done had he seen the South. He was perhaps attracted by something else besides the architecture of Italy. We know that when Dürer went to Venice he was most interested in the problems of line, eurythmy and the nude. Although Grünewald was also impressed as his picture of *St. Mauritius* at Munich shows, by the monumental simplicity of Italian art, the mighty pose of its figures, and the nobility of its draperies, he was even more attracted by the wonderful world of colour and of sentiment which Leonardo had revealed. The effects of light in his paint are Leonardesque,

[1] Joachim von Sandrart (1606-88), himself a painter and engraver, is the Vasari of German art. The seventh volume of his monumental work upon the fine arts, *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bildhauer- und Malerkunst* (2 vols., Nuremberg, 1675-79), revised by Volkmann (8 vols., *ib.*, 1768-75), contains the lives of the painters.—Ed.

as is also the smile that plays about Mary's lips and the soft wavy hair encircling her countenance. The *Madonna in the Grotto* is the elder sister of the same subject at Colmar. Even the landscapes are different from what Germany offers; he does not, like Altdorfer and Cranach, paint the young green foliage of German woods, but a sensuous, sappy nature, recalling the Riviera. All the plants are luxuriant and rich in colour, almost seeming to smother in their overpowering fulness of life. Every tree makes the impression of rapid tropical growth. Sappy parasites wind from stem to stem; garlands and creepers climb luxuriantly through the branches; and glowing red roses gleam from the dark foliage. It is curious to hear that even the donor of Grünewald's principal work was an Italian, the preceptor Guido Guersi; but even stranger to observe that many of his Leonardesque qualities are found in the works of an older artist of Mayence, the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet.

In its pictorial and spiritual qualities, Grünewald's masterpiece, the celebrated Isenheim altar-piece, now in the Museum of Colmar, is the most astonishing work produced by German art during the fifteenth century. Although he does not stand in such close relation to nature as Cranach and Altdorfer, and although it is useless to seek for German soulfulness in his works, he has nevertheless run through the whole scale of human emotion: from transfigured sensuality to cruel tragedy, and from joyful ecstasy to ghostly

"Satanism." An entire witches' Sabbath is let loose in his painting representing the *Temptation of St. Antony.* From the ravines and the fissure in the rock hideous monsters crawl forth, not the tame little devils of Schongauer, but wild demonic creatures. Then there is a change of scene; heaven opens, angels descend, and a golden temple of luxuriant parasites, grape vines, and flowers arises, as if by magic, from the landscape. Cherubim descend, making music and singing in stormy devotion to Mary. In the other wings of the altar, a wild cry of pain strikes us. The sufferings of Christ are over; the arms of the cross bend under the burden of his lifeless body. The wounds made by the scourge still bleed; the fingers are cramped, the toes stretched, and the feet swollen; the head, like that of a man who had been hanged, sinks heavily to one side. Magdalen cries aloud, and Mary sinks to the earth in deathlike rigidity. The *Resurrection* is Grünewald's greatest work as a painter of light. The starry heaven is opened and the clouds are torn apart; but while the earth remains in darkness, fluttering cloud-like light floods the Saviour, whose figure has no corporeal but a ghostly effect; it seems an apparition of light which has suddenly taken shape, only to dissolve again into vapour. This is more than a colouristic achievement; it is a new way of thinking. The linear style of older artists is replaced by a purely pictorial style, centring around the treatment of light and shade. A curious perspective in the history

of art is here revealed. Sandrart writes that the painter Philipp Uffenbach, a pupil of Grünewald's pupil Hans Grimmer, had often told him at Frankfort of the strange master who "led such a melancholy life" at Mayence. This Uffenbach was the master of Adam Elsheimer, who inspired Pieter Lastmann, who was in turn the teacher of Rembrandt; and thus the two greatest fantastic painters of the North clasp hands over the centuries.

An immediate influence upon German art was not exercised by Grünewald. For it would hardly harmonise with the style of Hans Baldung to call him a successor of this master. It is true that upon making the acquaintance of the Isenheim altar in 1512 he adopted its creator's tendency towards dreamy and colouristic effects. If nothing were known of Grünewald, the altar of the Freiburg minster might be celebrated as the greatest sixteenth-century German achievement in colour. The beaming light, the tropical landscape with the luxuriant palms in whose foliage angels are swinging, resemble those in Grünewald's works. But for lack of the instinct of a creative spirit, the colour is subordinated to rigid line.

Of his later panels, painted at Strassburg, the allegories and his representation of Death stand nearest to the sentiment of our own day. Baldung here shows a fine eye for the sensuous charm of the female nude. Women, music, and cats are curiously juxtaposed in the example at Nuremberg. Strange also is

the dæmonic trend of many of his works. One thinks of Stuck's *Sin* before the woman full of passionate desire at whose feet the serpent crawls, or of Rops, before the allegories of the Basel Museum, in which death, like a were-wolf, seizes youthful women, pressing his fleshless teeth in elfine, vampire-like passion upon their rosy lips.

As Leonardo was for Grünewald, so Giovanni Bellini was a mentor for the Suabian masters. They are equally unacquainted with thoughtful fantasy, German inwardness, or wild passion; but insinuating, charming, and pleasing in their gentle sentiment, graceful flow of line, and harmonious colour. The treasures of the Italian Renaissance had been revealed to them earlier than to the Frankish and Bavarian masters, and they dallied with these ornaments as the Italians had centuries before with the antique. One sees splendid halls with painted ceilings resting upon Corinthian columns, mighty niches in churches with open aisles, Renaissance fountains and gilded thrones, in the midst of which, as in the Venetian paintings, gentle and quiet events occur.

In Ulm Martin Schaffner was the first to follow this path. Instead of the unctuous pulpit tone sounded by Zeitblom, his elder countryman, he indulges in worldly *causerie*. There is nothing angular or rugged in his works, but all is of flowing elegance. In his principal painting, the organ-doors of the imperial foundation of Wettenhausen, now in Munich, rich Gothic foliage

is combined with cupids, dolphins, and other joyful decorative elements of the Renaissance. Gay columns of marble with golden capitals arise; and the draperies fall with an easy elegance. His *Death of Mary* does not occur in her bed, as in older German paintings, but in the solemn nave of a church where, surrounded by apostles, she sinks to earth. For Schaffner had already been influenced by the representative spirit of the *cinquecento*, which considered the homelike and genre accessories of the older art ordinary.

Augsburg, in which, unlike Nuremberg, the life of a great city pulsated, was the little Paris of those days. Even to-day, notwithstanding the levelling influence of time, the two cities preserve this contrast: in Nuremberg Gothic churches, oddly decorated tabernacles, and angular narrowness; in Augsburg broad streets, mighty Renaissance palaces, and fountains with statues. The fountain of Augusta, a proud embodiment of the Roman origin of Augusta Vindelicorum, is the characteristic feature of Augsburg. Not only by reason of its pride as a Roman colony, but also through its commercial relation with Venice, it was destined to be an Italian enclave on German soil. The high-school of Augsburg merchants was Venice, where in the Fondaco dei Tedeschi its merchant princes like the Fuggers obtained their education.

Its painters, therefore, were the Venetians of the North. Ulrich Apt alone, in his *Crucifixion* at Augsburg, the altar-piece of the Munich University Chapel,

and the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ*, creates a northern and Netherlandish impression. The pictures of the others all point to the South. Although Hans Burgkmair belonged to the school of Schongauer, his connection with Venice is proved by the fact that Caspar Straffo, a Venetian, was apprenticed to him in 1501, and that the background of his chiaroscuro print *Death the Executioner* exhibits a canal scene with gondolas. It would be vain to search for delicacy of feeling in his works. Even in treating such subjects as the *Passion* or the *Apocalypse* in his wood-cuts, he achieved only a decorative effect, and confined himself to placing ideas borrowed from others in pleasing surroundings. But the prints designed for the *Weisskunig*, a life of the Emperor Maximilian, are graceful and elegant, and moreover valuable sources of information upon costumes and arms. The same sense of harmony in form and colour also characterises his paintings. Quite Venetian is the mighty, gloomy effect of the Renaissance architecture surrounding the figures, and the manner in which he places the throne of Mary in the midst of the landscape. The heads of his Madonnas, with the regular oval and loose plaits of hair framing the features, bear the impress of the South. By a capriciously distorted position of the mouth he sought to impart a Bellinesque touch and something of the dreamy melancholy of upper Italy to his works. Even his feeling for landscape is Venetian; for he painted only southern nature—golden oranges gleaming

in the dark foliage—never the German; nor did he attempt to render detail in sharp outline, but rather to attain misty light effects in which the outlines are dissolved in the decorative masses.

Gumpolt Giltlinger, a rather clumsier artist, offers in his *Adoration of the Kings* further variations of the same style, and Christopher Amberger is altogether a Venetian. His music-making angels, the soft, full figures of his women with their golden hair, the pompous columnar architecture and the glowing colour—all these things impress one as if the altar-pieces had been painted not on the banks of the Lech but on the Lagoons. His best portraits are in the Berlin Gallery: those of Charles V. and Sebastian Münster, which unite with the acute observation of nature, characteristic of the German, Venetian nobility of character and harmony of colour. By similar works the last great Augsburg artist, Hans Holbein the younger, achieved his world-wide reputation.

VIII. Holbein

Since Dürer and Holbein are honoured as the greatest German artists of the sixteenth century, the inclination to place them in antithesis arises; not in order to decide, in accordance with the well-known scheme, which of the two was the greater, but because comparisons afford very valuable means of characterisation.

One is first struck by the change which had taken place in art since the appearance of Dürer. As a pupil of Wohlgemuth, the latter began with angular Gothic forms, and laboriously achieved harmony and simplicity; while Holbein stood from the beginning upon the soil of the Renaissance, which he had learned from his father. Besides the differences in time, there was a striking difference in their surroundings; in the one case the uneven, angular Nuremberg, in the other the urban and elegant Augsburg, which also imparted to its artists an urbane and polished character. Finally they were radically different in character. Although both were Germans they were nevertheless antipodes. While Dürer was at bottom a scholar and closed his activity with theoretical and scientific works, Holbein was quite indifferent to the theory of art, and, indeed, perhaps never took a pen in hand to write. As soon as he had left Nuremberg Dürer at once kept a diary, or at least wrote long letters to his friends; but no letters of Holbein to his friends or family survive, notwithstanding his long residence abroad. This is indicative not merely of laziness in writing but of lack of feeling. Standing before the celebrated portrait in Basel with which he said farewell to his family in 1529, one receives a similar impression. His wife sitting there is the same being to whom he had sworn faith ten years before, except that she has grown older and now seems a burden to him. The handsome fellow of thirty-five, who wishes to conquer the world

for himself, could no longer use this matron who seemed to him so provincial and countrified.

> "Was schert mich Weib, was schert mich Kind,
> Ich trage weit besseres Verlangen.
> Lass sie betteln gehen, wenn sie hungrig sind;"

this was probably his only sentiment for his family. Dürer would never have deserted his wife, whom he took with him even upon his journey to the Netherlands; and he was bound by the same tenderness to his native town. However much he rejoiced to receive a visit from Bellini at Venice, or when at Antwerp the artists instituted a torch-light procession in his honour, nothing could have moved him to leave Nuremberg. Holbein, on the other hand, was more suited in his unpatriotic cosmopolitanism to the international world of learning at Basel. Among these humanists he found his especial affinity in Erasmus. Could Dürer be summoned from the grave and asked whom among his contemporaries he honoured most, he would have answered, Luther. He feared for him with constant solicitude, and read his writings with throbbing heart. Holbein's life was influenced only by the Voltaire of the sixteenth century, the sceptical and ironical Erasmus.

It would not be wrong to call Dürer the Luther and Holbein the Erasmus of German art; for the latter's portrait of himself has the same mocking and critical expression. In his portrait at Munich Dürer appears as a visionary, staring rigidly into another world, like an

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

PORTRAIT OF GEORG GISSE

Berlin Gallery

apparition of Christ among mankind. As sacramental and solemn as is Dürer's portrait, so profane and worldly is that of Holbein. His clear, light blue eyes gaze not into the other world, but sharply and keenly into this one. There is also something cold and merciless in this face of the man who, when his father ended in misery and his brother was overwhelmed by life, was as cold and indifferent toward them as others had been to him.

A document of 1517, summoning him to appear before court in order to answer for a nocturnal brawl with goldsmiths' apprentices, illumines another side of his nature. From it one can see that he also resembled those Swiss artists who were known as such wild fellows. Urs Graf especially, a rude and adventurous companion, was a true type of the time. He marched through the country with market-women; served as a lansquenet in the murderous battle of Marignano; was warned in court to cease the licentious life which he had openly and shamelessly led with strumpets, and had to promise that he would henceforth neither jostle, pinch nor beat his lawful spouse. Holbein also was something of a lansquenet. It is no accident that he was so fond of drawing quarrelsome peasants and lansquenets; that he painted the first courtesan picture in German art, that of Dorothea Offenburg; and that in his London will he made no provision for his family at Basel, but only for his illegitimate children.

With this analysis of his nature, that of his art is also given. Dürer, the thinker, expresses as an artist also the power of his personality in thoughts. His art is poetic and story-telling, and his principal characteristic is a brooding element, a reflective absorption in mysterious, allegorical ideas. Holbein never offers us such heavy nourishment. Not only is the allegorical and thoughtful absent; he is also a stranger to the hearty and confidential element of Dürer's work. In examining the latter's *St. Jerome* one imagines that it is the artist himself, sitting in his quiet retreat near the Tiergärtner gate, labouring at his engravings and rejoicing in the sunshine that plays so cosily upon the floor and chests. Turning through the leaves of his *Life of Mary* the student is charmed with the deep love of family pervading the works of this man, who was never blessed with children. In his landscapes he himself lives, as fresh, pious, joyful, and free as they are, and with the wanderer's staff in this hand he marches over hill and dale. There is nothing of all this in the works of Holbein. Homeless himself, he was lacking in the German love of home. Although he had children, he only knew the child as an Italian *putto*. When he paints landscapes at all they are so much like applied art that one could more readily conceive them as chased in silver than as existing in reality. Mysterious nooks and cosy corners, inviting the beholder to reflect and dream, do no exist in his works.

As Dürer began with his *Apocalypse*, so did Holbein with book-titles; but while even in such work the former remained a deep thinker—as, for example, in his *Knots*—everything in Holbein's works is characterised by a clear and flowing elegance. Besides the ornamentation of books, he also designed for applied art; and while Dürer's decorative designs were dramas unsuitable for the stage (because in these things, too, he placed so much thought that no artisan could carry them out), Holbein's, although everything in them is strange, whimsical, and joyous, were at the same time of a simplicity which admitted of practical execution. He knew exactly how much he could expect of the artisan and of the material.

Passing from the ornamental to his designs of figures, let us first examine those for stained glasses. Saints, Madonnas and angels alternate with sturdy lansquenets in gay and picturesque costume; not to forget those designs of feminine costume, which were resurrected thirty years ago by Makart and Fritz August Kaulbach. Finally, he also appears as a singer of the *Messiad*, in which work his difference from Dürer is clearly shown. While the latter composed thoughtful religious epics and preached the life of the Redeemer to the people, Holbein only gives designs for stained glasses; quite unconcerned as to the emotional content of the subject, and only inquiring how the silhouette of the figures would harmonise with their decorative surroundings. The

same is true of his wood-cuts, which belong to the same circle of ideas. Dürer never illustrated, but incorporated his own thoughts, bringing before the eye only that which moved his innermost being. Holbein's illustration of the Bible would hardly have appeared had not Luther completed his translation just at that time. In his illustration of the Apocalypse he shapes even those things which for Dürer contained the deepest riddles of the spirit into clear and elegant forms. With the same impartiality shown in his designs for Luther's Bible, he illustrated the Vulgate also. The Old Testament, with which he was connected by no ties of heart, permitted him to appear even more as a profane narrator. Even in his *Dance of Death* he is a jolly comrade whom neither the devil nor hell inspires with terror. The night of insanity broods over Rethel's version, and that of Klinger is thoughtful and dæmonic. Death, as Holbein conceived him, is not the great world-dominating power, but a wild soldier, who, like Urs Graf, takes pleasure in jostling, poking, and beating civilians.

Even with the brush in hand, he remains the same able workman. The entire manual dexterity of the old German stone-masons seems revived in him. He mounted scaffolds to decorate façades like those still popular in southern Germany and Tyrol. In his mural paintings of the council-chamber at Basel he obtained a monumental effect by a simple decorative style. Even in his panels he never became

a dreamer, but rather reminds us of the dual activity of Menzel. Examining the ornamental illustrations of Menzel for the works of Frederick the Great, one is astonished to see with what facility the same man, otherwise known as a realistic painter, was also a master of clever improvisation. So Holbein, the facile decorator and improviser, is in his oil paintings essentially realistic; he never applies the brush without consulting his model, knowing no fantasy, and trusts only his clear and sure eye.

His first masterpiece, the *Christ* of the Basel Museum, only bears this title *pro forma*. It is in truth a powerful realistic representation, before which in our own day Léon Bonnat and Wilhelm Trübner stood in thoughtful meditation before they themselves painted the subjects which aroused the horror of visitors to universal expositions. In other works Holbein places the chief emphasis upon costume; he introduces as saints the beautiful women, much *décolletées* and in rich costumes, who at a later period aroused the same indignation among Protestant reformers as had Ghirlandajo's figures with Savonarola. In the Madonna at Solothurn he has portrayed his wife Elsbeth Schmidt, at that time a young woman, and his oldest child. As in the northern Italian works, a knight and a monk stand at her side as guard of honour. The same noble simplicity was not possible in the *Madonna of Burgomaster Meyer*, the original of which is at Darmstadt. Here the problem was to unite a whole family—the

father, his two wives, and three children—about Mary in a picture which should serve as an epitaph. It afforded, however, all the greater opportunity to a portrait painter; for it would be out of place to speak of religious feeling or to search for heavenly longing and lyric softness in this picture. On the contrary, just this Madonna shows wherein the gifts of the master lay; for Holbein's distinction lies in his portraits.

Even in portraiture he cannot dispense with the coldness which is his prevailing characteristic. Such a clear and sober man was incapable of sentimental fits. When Holbein, unknown and searching for fortune, came to England, he was taken up by Sir Thomas More, the royal chancellor. For a year he lived in More's house, and through him he was introduced into learned and court circles. Yet in the following year he served the same Henry who had condemned his first patron to the scaffold. He witnessed the executions caused by Henry, and lived through a dance of death far more awful than the one he had designed. The proudest and most touching figures upon the stage of Henry VIII.'s reign stand before us in his portraits: statesmen, princes of the church, noblemen, and beautiful women, over whom even while he painted them the Damocles sword of destiny hung. His portraits betray nothing of this tragedy; even the temperament and disposition of his models is a matter of indifference to him. A stranger living among strangers he only felt himself a *camera obscura*. Trav-

ARCHBISHOP WARHAM OF CANTERBURY

Louvre

elling in the service of the King to Brussels and later to Clèves, he painted the proposed queens Christina of Denmark and Anne of Clèves with the same objectivity with which he also painted Jane Seymour. One might almost say that Holbein himself had something of Henry VIII. about him. One can hardly conceive of other German artists, like Dürer and Grünewald, living in England. What could such fantasts have done in the midst of these practical, positive people, with their sensible matter-of-fact disposition and their sanguine egotism which knew no ideals? Holbein suited England; when he became court painter to Henry VIII. two congenial spirits found each other. There was a secret bond between them, the same pitiless coldness. Even his colour appears to supplement this cold sensibility; for although Holbein occasionally used warm colour, cold harmonies are far more characteristic of his work. Blue and black, green and grey especially appear in cool and silvery harmonies, as distinguished as they are icy.

In this unparalleled objectivity lies also his greatness. Consider the portrait painters of all centuries; each one is more or less one-sided, succeeding with certain heads, but utterly hopeless when attempting to depict others. Jan van Eyck rejoices in pronounced ugliness, in fantastic noses, wrinkled hands, and furrowed countenances. Dürer, the master of the *Four Apostles*, succeeds as a portraitist only in interpreting the heads of thinkers; while van Dyck, Holbein's successor in

England, is powerless to portray rugged, manly characters, and feels himself at home only with gracious womanhood and dandified nobility. In contrast to this, Holbein reflects nature with an absolute objectivity, and is equally great in portraying the business-like expression of a Giese or the puffed-up brutality of King Henry; a weather-browned, swearing sea-bear, or the distinguished ambassador Moret; the refined grace of Christina of Denmark, or the homely provincialism of Anne of Clèves. Considering the paths afterwards traversed by court painting, one must admire not only the versatility but also the sentiment of the master. There is something imposing in this rugged plebeian pride which, even before the king's throne, never learned how to flatter.

Even more than Holbein's pictures one admires his drawings. For the modern eye is accustomed to value artistic mastery most when it is expressed with boldest directness. A sketch preserving the original thought, the very handwriting of the master, is dearer to us than the completed painting no longer revealing the process of creation. Holbein's drawings, and especially the sketches in Windsor Castle, therefore contain, according to the present taste, the quintessence of his art. He was the first to form for himself what may be called a stenographic style, which in its grandiose simplicity has no equal in the art of the sixteenth century. The simpler the means, the more astonishing the effect. A skilful line of the pencil suffices to fix

a character or to create the impression of the corporeal. Had he created nothing else than these rapid and accurate drawings, they alone would suffice to insure him a place among the first draughtsmen in the history of art.

When he died at London in 1543 German art was buried with him. That he was compelled to leave home and seek sustenance in a foreign land, already presaged the end of German artistic life. For in the religious and political struggles of the day art was necessarily silenced. Such works as still came into being were created by foreigners; and instead of German art there existed only Italian art upon German soil.

Chapter IV

The Triumph of the Sensual in Italy

1. The Influence of Leonardo

IF one wished to denominate the change which Italian art experienced at the beginning of the sixteenth century with a single characteristic expression, he might call it the reaction against Savonarola. A spiritual period was followed by one of sensuality, and the mortification of the senses by their triumph. When Botticelli painted, Savonarola's eloquence had changed all Italy into a house of God. The people streamed together to hear from him the gospel of renunciation and of the joys of paradise. The *Banishment of the Vices*, at that time so often painted, is no eternal allegory, but homage to Savonarola, who drove the vices out of Italy.

But when the executioner's pyre of the Piazza della Signoria had consumed the troublesome disturber of peace, what he had outlawed, sensuality and the joy of living, arose phœnix-like from the ashes. It is true that at this time religious notes were also sounded. Luther had nailed his theses to the church door at Wittenberg, and an echo of these blows vibrated

through Italy. But it was only a soft echo which was soon silent. Italy did not need to be excited over what took place in foreign countries. The generation which listened to Savonarola was followed by a new worldly race which wished to enjoy to the full the pleasures which life offered. The earth itself had become a paradise, and the most beautiful thing in this paradise was the fall of man. If, as was related, a cardinal at the court of Leo X. had his bathroom decorated with love-myths of the ancient gods; if another declared that to the perfection of the papal court only women were lacking; if, as is reported, one of the following popes upon his death-bed answered with a painful smile to the priest who was painting the joys of the other world, "This pleasure will be all the greater the longer it is deferred"—all such incidents illumine, in a striking manner, the spirit of the time. And what happened at Rome, the city of St. Peter, is more comprehensible elsewhere. There were eleven thousand courtesans in Venice, and at Parma there is said to have been a nunnery where the experiences related in Boccaccio's *Decamerone* could have been duplicated. A paganism rejoicing in the senses, such as had existed at Athens and Alexandria, had once more come over the world. Art is the chronicle of its age, and if a title were sought for the epoch following Savonarola, it could only be found in one like the following: art under the influence of sensuality. Glancing backward into the past, it is not difficult to recognise

in Leonardo the man who began this new era. For however much he may have resembled Botticelli, Bellini, and Perugino in spirituality, the soul which he gave to his women is a different one. For these artists, however different they were, the Christian gospel of the renunciation of earthly things was determinative. The eyes of their chaste and pale women do not long for earthly joys, but gaze, foreboding future suffering, with melancholy piety into the infinite. In this resignation and perfect renunciation of all earthly joys, they embody the ethical content, the innermost spirit of Christianity. Leonardo's works contain no such religious sentiment. One is no longer reminded of a great cathedral where the quivering incense ascends to heaven: the *odeur de femme* has replaced the incense. The senses of these women have been awakened, and they no longer practise self-denial. Like a suppressed, erotic earthquake is the quiver about their mouth, and the moist shimmer which the Greeks gave to the love-goddess glistens in their eye. While Botticelli painted his Venus as chaste as Mary, in Leonardo's hands Mary became a goddess of love.

The body also asserted its rights against the soul. Those earlier artists thought with Millet: When I paint a mother, she should only be beautiful through the glance with which she beams upon her child. The earthly grace of Leonardo is not confined to the head; the love charm is indissolubly united with the body;

and for this reason thin gauze draperies cling to the voluptuous forms. In his search for sensual beauty, he commingles the charms of both sexes.

In subject also he stands in contrast to the artists of the age of Savonarola. They painted the Crucifixion, the Entombment, and the Bewailing of the Body of Christ in a manner as gloomily pathetic as the thunder tones of the prophet himself. From Leonardo da Vinci, the steel-armoured youth who paces so serenely in Verrocchio's *Tobias*, all the waves of the religious movement rebounded. There is nothing sad in his works. Even his *Last Supper* is not the representation of the sad hour of parting, but a masterly dramatisation of a great psychological event. In the picture at Berlin he did not choose the moment of the Crucifixion or of the Entombment, but of the Resurrection. Christ is represented not as suffering, but as the victor over life and death. It is not his friends who bewail the martyred one, but two saints ecstatically glance up to the radiant Son of God. Indeed, he goes even further. As he knew no suffering, he knew no age and no decay. He avoided every theme which rendered it necessary to introduce Mary as an aged matron, as Bellini and Botticelli had done in their representation of the *Pietà*. In order to avoid painting folds and wrinkles, he went so far as to represent St. Anne in the same radiant youthful beauty as her daughter Mary.

How greatly he touched the heart of his time in this respect is shown by the literary products of the epoch.

The same significance that the treatises on perspective and anatomy had for the fifteenth century belongs to those upon the beauty of women in the sixteenth—such as the Venetian Luigini's *Libro delle belle donne* or the *Discorso della bellezza* by the Florentine Firenzuola. The same spirit of erotic sensuality and Olympian serenity henceforth prevails in art. The whole emotional content of the age is expressed in that Leonardesque smile. In the Crucifixion every expression of pain is softened, and the harsh severity of the theme is deprived of its realistic truth by delicate treatment. In martyrdoms not the physical pain and suffering, but ecstatic foreboding of heavenly joys is depicted. They no longer love to linger with sad things, but timidly avoid all that can cause pain. Christ's heart bleeding and full of wounds, and his passion, about which the representations of the German masters centred, no longer exist for the Italians. It is distasteful to this age which takes so much joy in the senses to see God suffer, die, and offer himself as a sacrifice. Mary, too, is neither the pale maiden nor the careworn mother, but an elegant lady of fashion who, even in her later years, preserved the charm of a young widow. The saints who serve her as guard of honour no longer resemble the ecstatic children of the desert and the weather-beaten grey-beards of former days; they are now joyful individuals for whom heaven signifies a court of love, and gallant young gentlemen bowing delicately before an adored lady. Indeed,

they even receive a touch of feminine beauty. John the Baptist is transformed from the aged man in haircloth into a nude curly-haired youth with ecstatic glance; Magdalen, the penitent, becomes a fair sinner, and Golgotha has been transformed into a Christian Olympus, where there is neither struggle nor tragic pain, but pure unsullied happiness.

Thence to the actual Olympus was not a long journey. After Leonardo had opened the way with his *Leda*, all the antique subjects outlawed by Savonarola found their way back into art. As in Leonardo's painting, the pale Crucified One of Golgotha soared to heaven, and the joyful swarms of the gods of Greece took possession of the earth. The Hill of Venus which Botticelli, the penitent sinner, had deserted, now became the shrine to which the painters made pilgrimages. They knew nothing of the solemn power of the under world; of the struggles of the demi-gods Jason and Perseus, Theseus and Meleager, or of the heroes of Roman history. Ovid alone is the breviary of the age. As they depicted even the religious figures deprived of clothing, so also they preferred mythological subjects, because the Hellenic was such a lightly clad and very *décolleté* epoch. In abrupt contrast to the monkish art of the past, they celebrated the soft linear rhythm of the nude; they painted almost exclusively the voluptuous love-adventures of the ancient gods who transformed themselves to delude fair mortals; and used antique subjects only to whisper sensuous, melting

words and tempting love-melodies. A kind of fifteenth century Rococo thus followed the impassioned Baroco of the age of Savonarola.

II. Leonardo's Followers

The painters who assembled about the great master in Milan have not as yet been adequately considered by modern scholarship, which has dismissed them as planets shining by reflected light from the sun of Leonardo; as imitators who change the hoarded treasure of the master into small coin. Leonardo, of course, forms the imposing background of the artistic life of Milan. We are reminded of an Alpine landscape, the highest summit of which is his mighty head, so like an ancient river-god's. At the foot of the colossus the others contend; not giants, but men. Each of them had his own personality, and increased by some feature the realm of beauty. It is not correct to say that they only imitated the female ideal of Leonardo; every one had his own, differing in delicate shades from that of the master: the same melody, perhaps, but in a different key.

In the portrait of the Emperor Maximilian, Ambrogio de Predis still appears quite a quattrocentist. In the portrait of the Ambrosiana formerly supposed to be Bianca Sforza, wife of Maximilian, the Leonardesque female type first appears. How deeply he absorbed

BIANCA MARIA SFORZA

Ambrosiana Collection, Milan

the spirit of the master is shown by the London copy of the *Madonna Litta* in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg formerly also attributed to Leonardo. It is the representation of a distinguished lady taking pleasure, as they did in the age of Rousseau, in nursing her child. A sensual and piquant touch is here imparted to the ancient motive of the Madonna.

Andrea Solario, descended from an ancient family of painters, was compelled as a young man to leave Milan and received his first impressions in Venice. His youthful works, principally portraits and half-length figures of the Madonna, create the impression made by a pupil of Bellini. After his return to Milan he seems to have been influenced by Borgognone. Reminiscent of this phase of his style, which resembles that of the *Empire*, is the *Repose on the Flight into Egypt* of the Museo Poldi Pezzoli, the strange Madonna who reminds one of Queen Louise of Prussia. In the Madonna of the Louvre he has become a pupil of Leonardo, but a perfumed and over-refined one. His other painting in the Louvre, the delicate head of John, upon a silver platter, is an interesting example of how art, freeing herself from the church, is at this time used to make quite personal confessions. In his portrait of the Liechtenstein Gallery, Leonardo created the type of the dæmonic woman; and Solario, developing the theme, celebrates love as the dæmonic, enslaving power. For the refined head with the delicate features is probably his own portrait,

and the entire painting is dedicated to the lady who played the rôle of Salome in his life.

Two other pupils of Leonardo, Francesco Melzi and Antonio Boltraffio, occupy a peculiar position, even as men. Such a charm was exercised by Leonardo's personality upon his surroundings that young aristocrats for whom it was not at all necessary devoted themselves to painting. With such dilettanti the problem is a peculiar one. Being less constrained and in a position to follow their taste more than a professional could, perhaps also because of their aristocratic descent, they often created the most refined works.

Although Boltraffio's female types are derived from Leonardo's, he marks a new step in the history of painting. In former pictures Mary was always the Virgin: at first the maiden who had renounced the world, and then a more sensual type. Boltraffio's Madonna in the National Gallery—a woman mighty in outline, with serious eyes quivering with suppressed melancholy, with deep black hair shimmering almost into blue framing her harsh, brown features—such a type has less in common with Leonardo than with Watts and Feuerbach. The Child comes from its mother's lap and returns into the lap of the earth: such perhaps was also the thought of Watts when he conceived the *Angel of Death*. A manly accent, a touch of solemn grandeur, distinguishes Boltraffio from the others. Solemn and sublime is the figure of St. Barbara in the midst of a gloomy, rocky landscape;

stately and severe *La belle Ferronière* of the Louvre[1] and of the Czartoryski gallery—both after the same model used at a later period for the Casio Madonna, On account of the same serious and monumental trend the *Resurrection* of the Berlin Gallery should perhaps be ascribed not to Leonardo but to Boltraffio.

Francesco Melzi, Leonardo's youthful friend, who followed him to France and was present at his death, is known only by a single painting, *Vertummus* in the Berlin Gallery, But what distinction exhales from this delightful work! Even the choice of subject is singular. No artist before him, except Leonardo in a sketch, had painted that little-known tender scene of the *Metamorphoses*, where Vertummus, the radiant god of the seasons, changes himself into a poor old woman in order to excite the pity and thereby win the love of the chaste Pomona. With what choice taste the thin gauze garment of Pomona is arranged, and how entrancingly sweet are her dainty Rococo head and the smile playing about her mouth! With what fine taste of the connoisseur has he chosen all these flowers and arranged them into a fragrant still-life! True, the same dainty head, the same delight in flowers, the same seductive, tender female charms, and the same Hellenic spirit recur in *Columbina*, a painting in the Hermitage. If this, as modern research now assumes, is the work of Giampetrino, *Vertummus*

[1] This painting is commonly ascribed to Leonardo, and sometimes identified with Lucrezia Crivelli, the mistress of Lodovico Sforza.—Ed.

should also be ascribed to him. His other known works are principally Madonnas, rather glassy in technique, and in the midst of cosy, almost Netherlandish landscapes.

Bernardino Luini is the perambulating master-workman of the school. The many crowded frescoes which he painted for the small towns of upper Italy might lead to the under-estimation of his lovable talent. For he appears in these as a survivor of the *quattrocento*. Well-ordered composition and beautiful simplicity are lacking; and charming details like Magdalen in the *Crucifixion* are lost in the fulness of indifferent figures. But in his youth he was a very dainty master, a true son of that Milan which sought in love-revelries a consolation for the horrors of war. He once painted his own portrait as *St. Sebastian*, looking ecstatically out of the picture, as if to charm beautiful women, and this trend towards an effeminate joyfulness pervades all his works. His picture of the *Bathing Nymphs* in the Palazzo Reale in Milan is something unheard-of in the art of the *cinquecento*; young maidens in poses approaching Fragonard, and a landscape as boldly handled as by any Impressionist of the present day. At a later period he appears to best advantage in frescoes, when the problem, as in the *Sposalizio* is to paint soft and dreamy beings. Most reflective of all, and most reminiscent of Perugino, are those small pictures which he painted for quiet rural churches. At a time when religious sentiment was on the wane,

he imparted to biblical subjects an honesty and devoted tenderness which seem an echo of the *quattrocento.* He neither thrills nor frightens, but is mild and touching and most in place when the subjects are quiet idyllic scenes, silent friendliness or happy smiles. His female martyrs have an expression of supreme blessedness, and with sweet ecstacy Mary regards her Child. One quite forgets that many works like the half-length *Vanity and Modesty* are only the solution of one of Leonardo's school problems; that in the semi-circular fresco in Lugano he had literally taken the Christ-child from Leonardo's *St. Anne* and little John from the *Vierge aux rochers.* The spectator never dreams before his paintings, nor is he led into a secret workshop reverberating with the throbbing thoughts of a genius. But because Leonardo has painted so little, we love Luini's works as the emanations of his master's spirit.

In the pictures of Cesare da Sesto Milanese blood is commingled with foreign elements. As he transplanted the ideals of Leonardo to Rome, so also he himself adopted something of the Roman style. A striving after a grand style and a love of contrast take the place of Milanese softness. He regards the Eternal City with the eyes of the romanticist, and loves to depict native ruins covered with ivy in the background of his paintings. The principal example of this sentiment for ruins is the *Adoration of the Kings* at Naples, with its mannered and out-stretched figures. As the central group of these paintings

recurs almost unchanged in a picture of the Madonna in the Hermitage, this also, which formerly bore Leonardo's name, was assigned to Cesare da Sesto. He is probably the only master in question in that lunette in Sant' Onofrio which was also considered a youthful work of Leonardo's. In the *Baptism of Christ* in the former Galleria Borghese he seemed half Roman, half Venetian, like a double of Sebastiano del Piombo, while in his *St. Catherine* at Frankfort, the feminine ideal of Milan is translated into the mystic and sickly—into the style of Gabriel Max.

The Madonnas of Gaudenzio Ferrari as well as the portraits of Bernardino de' Conti are further exemplifications of the fact that the school of Leonardo laid the foundations of modern painting of women. After Leonardo had shown the way, these masters were the first to realise the sensual charm of womanhood. They painted incidents like a flash of the eye, a smile wreathing the lips, the soft weariness following exertion, and the perfume of the hair, with the feeling of men to whom no sense of power but much appreciation of grace is accorded. That effeminate delicacy which has characterised so much of modern English art makes their works appeal especially to our own time.

Sodoma, the master of Siena, is the most over-refined of all. Like Luini, he also painted a number of indifferent pictures. Possessing a ready pictorial talent, he fulfilled every commission in an elegant manner, and appeared, Proteus-like, in the most different

masks. Yet one feels which works occupied his heart and which his hand only. In painting Crucifixions he remains altogether cool; and if he attempts to be energetic he becomes declamatory. In his pictures for the monks of Monte Oliveto he not unaptly played the rôle of Signorelli or Zurbaran; but he took pleasure only in the frescoes representing the courtesans attempting to seduce St. Benedict.

His delight in shocking the good burghers of Siena is a significant trait of his character. During his work at Monte Oliveto, he denied entry to the monks; and when he did permit it, the first glance of the pious brethren fell upon the group of courtesans, whom, upon command of the prior, he was compelled to furnish with clothes. In the *Crucifixion* of the Siennese Academy he painted himself as a soldier, in a sturdy, defiant attitude. The summons of the tax commission to make declaration of his possessions he answered with a list of all the strange animals which he kept.

Only when the problem is to paint women can he be taken seriously; he is then an enchanting master, nervous and sensitive, and inimitable in the manner in which he transforms Leonardo's smile into joyous, almost frenzied ecstasy. As he is bold, almost Parisian, in the courtesan group at Monte Oliveto, so in the celebrated painting of the Farnesina he depicted the bridal confusion of Roxana with the art of a connoisseur, furnishing a commentary, as in an *Ars amandi*, with the Cupids. Although the *Leda* of the Galleria Borghese

is a copy, it nevertheless gives an idea of the delicate Rococo perfume which pervaded the original. He is also a fine interpreter of the state of unconsciousness and of moments of gentle exhaustion; and the womanly sense of shame or a virginal blush could only be expressed, as was done by Sodoma in his wonderful figure of Eve, by a painter who was entirely a feminist.

He was even more charmed by the hermaphroditic expression in many of Leonardo's drawings of young men. When Sebastian dies, his smile is as full of joy as if he was destined in the other world to become what the abducted Ganymede was to the Olympians. The whole character of Sodoma is expressed in the figure of Isaac in his *Sacrifice of Abraham*. This youth with the head of a young girl and the delicate hips, crossing his full round arms over his bosom, is the Antinous of Christian art—an ideal of beauty which only occurs in times of the highest culture and greatest immorality. The swan in his *Leda* and the squibs which the Siennese burghers sent him furnished the logical supplement. There is something strange in the activity of this light-hearted artist, who began his career, like a *grand seigneur*, in revelry and riot, kept horses for the races, and walked about in silk and velvet, escorted by beautiful slaves, to die at last not in prison, but in a hospital.[1]

[1] In his description of Bazzi's life, the statements of which Professor Muther follows, Vasari seems to have been guided by no slight prejudice against the lighthearted and eccentric painter, due perhaps to his extreme partisanship for Beccafumi, Bazzi's chief rival at Siena. A

III. Giorgione

Even Byzantine Venice had become a heathen city. With Aldus Manutius, the refined scholar, the humanistic movement began; the celebated Academia Græca, in which he united his associates, considered itself a Platonic academy. At its meetings Greek was the only language spoken; a fine was levied upon every one who used an Italian word, and the proceeds were used to provide for banquets which remind one of the *soupers à la grecque* of the eighteenth century. The *Hypnerotomachia Polyphili*, that dreamy romance with its dainty wood-cuts, is the first monument of this time, when a breath of the bright and beautiful days of Hellas was wafted over the oriental soil of Venice.

Painting, heretofore so religiously severe, also became an inspired hymn to the beauty of this world and the Hellenic joy in the senses. Although Madonnas and saints were still painted, as in Bellini's days, the spirit of the pictures was no longer the same. No Christian self-denial but heathen sensuality beams from the eyes of these figures. The body, formerly despised, becomes free, and voluptuous forms shatter the tender casement of the soul. Along with Mary,

fondness for racing was considered a mark of distinction in those days So far from spending his last years in poverty and dying in a hospital, Bazzi, the possessor of two houses at Siena, seems to have been in affluent circumstances and to have lived quietly with his family. This is evident from the documents cited in Milanesi's edition of Vasari's *Lives* (Florence, 1878-85), vol. vi.—Ed.

Venus is honoured, and the gods of Greece make their joyful entry.

At first there is little to be seen of this change. For the work which stands on the threshold of the Venetian *cinquecento*, the *Madonna of Castelfranco*, is so tender and oblivious of the world that it can hardly be distinguished from Bellini's *Holy Conversations*. With the same tone with which the old century passed away, the new began. Two men, a young knight and a monk, stand guard before the throne of Mary. No breath of air moves, but everything is pervaded by a deep, silent repose, into which the saints also have dreamily sunk. Yet a dainty touch announces a new soul-life. However much the pretty oval head of the Madonna with its melancholy eyes and simply-parted brown hair resembles Bellini's types her sentiments are no longer the same. She silently dreams, sadly and tenderly, as if she were thinking of a distant lover. Although the figure is pure, it is pervaded by a refined sensuality; and one feels that for this artist Mary was no longer the Madonna; that he had kissed this mouth and had longed for this woman when she was absent.

"Vieni, o Cecilia,
Vieni t' affretta,
Il tuo t' aspetta
Giorgio." . . .

Whether these verses which were upon the back of the panel were written by the painter awaiting his beloved or by another, is a matter of indifference.

For this other man also felt the delicate sensual perfume wafted from the painting.

By every trait of his character Giorgione was called to be the pioneer of this new art. He was a native of the town whose church to-day prizes his altar-piece as its most splendid treasure: Castelfranco in the Marca Trevisana, to which poets were so fond of giving the title of "*amorosa.*" There nature is lyrically soft, and the air one breathes is sensuously laden; all is woven into a great and dreamy monotony of a mysterious and melancholy character. Men who have grown up in such surroundings are more sensitive in all their emotions than those who live among mountains and raw cliffs; for the perfume and melody of this strange, soft nature render the nerves more vibrating and tender. According to the legend, Giorgione was an illegitimate offshoot of the ancient noble family of Barbarelli; and there is, indeed, something noble in the complicated refinement of his nervous system, and something of the Shakespearian bastard in the wild way in which he stormed through life.

When he came to Venice he found himself upon his true soil. Vasari describes him as a pleasure-loving child, a worldling, who plunged full of passion into the whirlpool of life, progressing from one love-adventure to another, and tremulously enjoying a luxurious and sensual life. He depicts him as a *galantuomo* wandering through the streets in the evening with his lute and singing ecstatic love-songs to fair ladies.

When at thirty-two years of age he collapsed, the number of his works was not large, and even smaller is the number of those which have come down to us. In the earliest of these, the two little pictures in the Uffizi, representing the *Judgment of Solomon* and the *Childhood of Moses*, he still appears as a pupil of Bellini. But although the figures are drawn in the style of the primitives, one already recognises that this artist was destined to become a great landscape painter. Softly and delicately, not in hard outlines, the graceful tree-tops dissolve into the soft firmament. Pictures like Bellini's *Allegory*, the figure of a woman in a boat gliding so quietly over the floods, had probably made the deepest impression upon this dreamer.

But his admiration of Bellini was soon supplemented by that of another master. When, in commission for Tuzio Costanzo, the *condottiere* of Castelfranco, he created his first masterpiece, he had already made the acquaintance of the man whose art at that time illumined all Italy. In 1503–04 Leonardo had resided in Venice, and if he did not paint, he at least made drawings, and his female heads had certainly been seen by Giorgione. For the spirit which beams from the eyes of his Mary, a love no longer melancholy and self-sacrificing, but quivering and longing, is no longer the spirit of Bellini, but of Leonardo da Vinci. As he had found in Bellini his ideal as a landscape painter, Leonardo revealed to him the path through the joyful earthly realm of the senses.

Several idyllic pictures form the transition from the Christian to his Hellenic works. At that time a sentiment similar to that of Watteau's day pervaded the world. As in the eighteenth century men sought relief from the heroic and pompous in the Arcadian and the Elysian, so in the *cinquecento*, after the ascetic age of Savonarola, they wished to return into a Saturnian era, where there had been no Christianity, no monks, and no chorals; when the majestic wooded halls of the forests took the place of cathedrals; where men did not wait for the heavenly happiness, but enjoyed the earthly. Of the works of antique literature the pastoral poetry—that of Theocritus, Callimachus, Longus, and Nonnus—was most popular. As formerly Poliziano's pastoral drama *Orpheus* had been the most popular poem of the day, it was now Sazzanaro's *Arcadia*, published by Aldus Manutius. The bucolic and happy shepherd life of primeval days was the ideal of the spirit; as we are reminded by Giorgione's *Concert champêtre* of the Louvre.

From this painting one recognises anew Giorgione's importance as a landscape painter. A man of sentiment, so dependent upon his emotion that he could not exist without his Cecilia and died because she was unfaithful, became the creator of the *Stimmungsbild*—a painting reflecting the mood of the artist. With him everything was sentiment; so he was the first to discover language in which the soul of nature speaks—light. Like Watteau, he never gives a copy of nature, which seems

to exist only in order that happy men may live in her. Even the trees quiver as if with tenderness and longing and all is enveloped in a dreamy and sensuous atmosphere. In the objects also which he places in these landscapes the same longing, soft, and melancholy sentiment is re-echoed. He paints shepherds sitting as in a golden age near their herds, lost in dreams. He loves knights, for they also appear to him as the incarnation of days gone by: not wild conquerors devastating the land, but quiet dreamers who feel themselves the *Last Knights*; youths of soft, feminine forms, whose existence is passed in beautiful devotion to love. He depicts antique ruins because they also awaken elegiac memories of that distant time when no monks preached self-immolation and the cult of the senses was a religion. No man has yet guessed what he wished to say in his most celebrated work, the so-called *Familia di Giorgione*. Two objects are represented which seem to belong to one another and yet are strangely contrasted. Cecilia, the Madonna of Castelfranco, has become a young mother, nursing a child at her bosom. In no respect does she resemble the quiet Mary; there is nothing left of the ethereal chastity of the *quattrocento*.

This picture also prepares us for the one with which Giorgione concluded his life-work, his celebrated *Venus* in the Gallery of Dresden. That which in the Madonna at Castelfranco was longing, is here fulfilment. In unveiled beauty, Cecilia reclines upon the couch.

The little figure of the *Familia* has become a life-sized female nude, and the Madonna of Castelfranco has become Aphrodite. In contrast to Botticelli's Venus, in which the spiritual asceticism of the middle age still lingers, *le cri de la chair* here rises joyfully to heaven. Soft, undulating limbs are wearily distended. Only a man of such refined sense as Giorgione, painting not a picture but an experience, could throw open the portals of this new era.

When he was buried, the work was incomplete, and it is almost symbolic that Titian completed it by adding the landscape background. Indeed, in a second work which also hung incomplete in his studio, one might find an allegory of Giorgione's own career. It represents three philosophers, of whom only the youngest turns to the rising sun, while the two elder stand unconcerned at his side. So the youthful Giorgione was the first to see the rosy dawn of the new epoch; but artists older than he, following his leadership, continued his life-work.

IV. Correggio

In Correggio, the Leonardo of Parma, another shade of the erotic element in Italian painting appears. In all the other artists of the epoch the sensuality was external. For Giorgione his Cecilia was everything, and the sensuality of Bazzi is sufficiently indicated by his nickname. In the case of Correggio we know nothing

of such things. According to Vasari, as a lad he was "bashful and inclined to dreaming and melancholy." Although he visited different seats of art, he never became intimate with any of his colleagues, but was interested only in their pictures, inspecting them timidly as a cat, without any one knowing of his presence. His stay in lascivious Parma was not marked by a single scandal, nor did he ever paint a portrait. He did not like to look people in the eye, and felt himself most comfortable when alone, dreaming about what the others had experienced. This distinguishes his painting from Giorgione's. While the latter's *Venus* has the expression of weariness and of the soft repose after embraces, Correggio's figures are convulsed by a perpetual nervous trembling. His creations are dreamland figures, as, mysteriously laughing, they appear to the sleeper; the beautiful apparitions of a lonely soul full of tender sentiment, never outwardly expressed. To this his colour corresponds. In contrast to the figures of Giorgione placed in actual surroundings, Correggio's live in a dreamland veiled by twilight, transporting them into the far distance. The power under whose touch they tremble is no warm body, but a cloud.

Correggio's father was a seller of spices and the lad passed hours and days in the small shop, the odours of which have a stimulating effect upon the nerves. If behind the counter he read the Bible, it was neither the Books of Moses nor the drama of the Passion, but

the Song of Solomon and the beautiful story of Magdalen that charmed him. The entire Holy Writ was for him a love-story. He became acquainted also with the romance of antique legends; for through Lady Veronica Gambara his native town had become a seat of humanism, and the lady took pleasure in the timid lad. One can picture her stroking his locks and drawing him tenderly to her side, as she translated for him passages from Ovid, and told him the love-tales of the ancient gods. With beating heart he heard of the amorous adventures of Jupiter, of all the beautiful mortals whom he had deluded, of Io and Danæ, of Antiope and Leda. On closing his eyes at night he thought of them in feverish excitement, and they followed him like phantoms in his dreams. Such were the themes that lived in his spirit, that he wished to paint, and that he finally painted.

True, it was only by a roundabout way that he attained his end, and he was compelled to create many works which were against his temperament.

The beginnings of his art point to Mantua. In this town, to which he had come with Veronica in 1511, he received the first artistic impressions of his life. Mantegna, who still invisibly hovered over Mantua, became his first guide. He dreamed long in the Castello di Corte before the works of the great master, as a child dreams sitting at the feet of a bronze statue. The spirit of Mantegna, all that his realism and scholarship had created, were for him an unknown world. But one

painting attracted him, the only joyful one among Mantegna's works—the nude *putti* playing about the ceiling of the Camera degli Sposi. They pleased him, because they were so coy, so attractive, and so joyous. At Mantua he saw also the portrait of Isabella d' Este and other drawings by Leonardo, and having seen one work by the great magician he was attracted to Milan. It is pleasant to picture young Correggio at Milan after the return of Leonardo, not venturing to express his admiration to the master, but seated timid and dreaming before his paintings. He saw that soft *sfumato* which so effectively awakens the sensuous vibrating mood—and the heads which had hovered before him in his dreams: women quivering with joy, children modestly blushing when beautiful female saints or loving youthful angels tenderly observe them.

His earlier works reveal how the influence of Mantegna was replaced by that of Leonardo, and finally the independent Correggio was evolved. His *Madonna with St. Francis* especially, contains the quintessence of what he had adopted from others; and the *Betrothal of St. Catherine* shows the new element which he added. Leonardo's female ideal is transformed into a more dainty type, that of the Tanagra figurines. A morbid delicacy and over-refinement distinguishes him from the other painters of the *cinquecento* as much as it unites him with those of the Rococo. Especially in the nervous, delicate hands with soft, quivering touch,

the essence of Correggio's art lies. All the white, small, slender hands of princesses which Parmeggianino and many later artists painted are derived from Correggio's *Betrothal of St. Catherine.*

The following year (1518) was the turning point of his life, and the work which he created in commission for the noble prioress of the nunnery of San Paolo in Parma is characteristic not only of himself but of the age. Formerly the images of patron saints before which the nuns offered their prayers had been esteemed suitable decorations for nunneries; but Donna Giovanna thought in the Hellenic fashion. Diana, whose character as goddess of chastity did not prevent her from descending to Endymion, was the patroness whose crescent she chose for her coat of arms. And Correggio did not endeavour, like other masters of the Renaissance, to conceive a great and thoughtful composition, but confined himself to capricious, charming *causerie.* The *putti* of the Camera degli Sposi and the foliated architecture of the *Madonna della Vittoria* lived in his memory; and the result was the delicate little beings joyously and gracefully sporting about in the midst of the grape-vines on the walls and ceilings of the priory. Now comes an abrupt change of scene, transporting us into the presence of the gigantic cupola frescoes of the church of San Giovanni Evangelista and the cathedral of Parma, As if Melozzo da Forli or Michelangelo had turned his head, the quiet Correggio suddenly became a virtuoso

who makes hair flutter and draperies swell. Gigantic bodies writhe, throw their arms into the air, distort their features; angels thunder and storm through the sea of air. The fresco of the cathedral cupola already contains the entire heaven that lived in the fantasy of the Baroque painters. It is astonishing how he mocks at all difficulties and with what sureness he treads the path which led from the Renaissance to Pater Pozzo.[1] And yet how insignificant is the theme behind this clanging instrumentation! All is without force, form without content, the brows of thinkers without thought, mighty gestures without sense or purpose. Only in certain details is the former Correggio recognisable, as in the beautiful angels joyfully fluttering about the scene. Even the symbols of the evangelists in San Giovanni are in love; the angel of Matthew embraces John's eagle, and the lion of Mark jests with Luke's calf.

Correggio's scale was a limited one; and as, after his successes in the cupola frescoes, he was of the opinion that he could accomplish everything, he painted a whole series of works which show him from a disagreeable rather than a lovable side.

As often as he ventures into the domain of the pathetic and endeavours to depict the moments of great passion, his pictures are as false as ever was a religious painting of Boucher's day. As in the case

[1] A celebrated decorative artist of the Baroque period (1642-1709), whose chief work is in the church of Sant' Ignazio at Rome.—Ed.

THE MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE

Louvre

of Rococo painters the gift of depicting dignified and quiet manhood was also denied him. His people are beautiful as long as they are young, but insipid when they grow old. They have done nothing in their youth but smile, and now it appears how empty their hands were. One often feels that his instincts warned him; as when in the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ*, omitting the customary male friends of the Saviour, he introduces women alone as mourners, or when in his *Ecce Homo*, contrary to all usage, he introduces Mary and Magdalen instead of the soldiers; of course not the emaciated mother and remorseful penitent, but beautiful women with darkly-shaded eyes, ecstatically gazing upon an effeminate young man. But almost more numerous are the works in which men were not at all necessary, but which he spoiled by the introduction of empty-headed giants. Just because his entire feeling was feminine, he took it into his head to label them as men, with the same result as when a delicate, elegiac artist like van Dyck in his early period imitated Rubens. A hollow striving after power took the place of real, powerful grandeur. By gigantic theatrical figures placed conspicuously in the foreground, or else by virtuose, forced efforts suitable enough for cupola frescoes but not for panels, he spoiled the sentiment of many of his best paintings. Even in the celebrated *Holy Night* at Dresden, his beloved "ragout of frogs' legs" intrudes, depriving a scene which would otherwise

have been quiet and full of sentiment of its greatest charm.

Correggio is great only when the problem is to render not power, but gentle feelings, not in pathos but in harmless play and laughing joyfulness; in painting not men but women and children; and especially where he remains the painter of the graces and confines himself within the bounds of a charming Rococo. His name "Allegri" well indicates the confines of his art.

In describing his Madonnas one cannot, of course, use the same terms as we apply to those of Botticelli, Bellini, or Perugino. When these masters lived a mighty, solemn and religious art still existed. They understood the tenderness of religious tradition in all of its mystic charm, and had learned the significance of the qualities necessary for its expression. In comparison with them, Correggio appears affected and empty. Where he cannot be pathetic he is affectedly sweet; he translates their sincere devotion into earthly gallantry, into a dialogue of languishing glances and significant smiles. It is characteristic that Joseph no longer feels comfortable in these scenes; he disappears to avoid disturbing his wife with her friends, who in their turn are very liberal with their attentions. Not satisfied with making eyes at Mary, if she smiles upon one of them, the other uses the opportunity to coquet with a beautiful lady among the spectators. This is the beginning of that exchange of glances between

the figures in the painting and the observer which was a heritage of Correggio to Baroque painting. Correggio, if any one, was the genuine painter of the time, which of all the teachings of Christianity followed only one, "Little children, love one another," and that one almost too literally. Finally, it is a mockery to misuse the figures of Mary and the saints in order to paint love scenes.

Correggio felt this, and as far as possible he translated his figures into heathen conceptions. In the *Betrothal of St. Catherine* Sebastian might just as well have held a bunch of grapes instead of an arrow and been called Bacchus. St. John is transformed into an Adonis, and St. George into a Roman general. But his life-work was just as little completed with what he had previously done as was that of Mantegna when he had completed the *Triumph of Cæsar*. All those erotic visions which had dawned upon his youth when Veronica Gambara had translated Ovid to him, but had remained dreams, had still to take bodily form; and so at the end of his life he found at last his proper province. The same woman who gave occupation to Mantegna, Isabella d' Este, gave also to Correggio the opportunity of realising the ideals of his childhood. The last picture which Mantegna had painted for her represented the *Banishment of the Vices*; but now all the beings which Savonarola had sent into exile returned in triumph. Not until these pictures in which, turning away from Christianity, he

sang only the power of love, was the true Correggio revealed. Here he has thrown off the mask, and the former dissonance between theme and conception has disappeared. The emaciated image of the Redeemer no longer hangs on the cross, but, as in the etching by Rops, a female body, delicate as condensed light, appears; and over it, instead of the letters I. N. R. I., the word *Eros* is inscribed.

In his London picture, the *School of Cupid*, he lays down the basic theme. But the paintings of which one chiefly thinks when Correggio's name is mentioned are *Antiope* in the Louvre, *Danæ* in the Borghese Gallery, and *Leda* at Berlin—all intended by the Gongazas as presents for Charles V. The entire life of this man, who had lived so secluded from the outer world, had been a love-dream with beautiful women and laughing Cupids hovering about. For this very reason he created the most sensual paintings of his age, as Watteau most daintily rendered the fragrance of the Rococo. Being a sickly, lonely man, he never painted reality, but only dreams. It is no accident that the eighteenth century was so enthusiastic about Correggio, and called him the prince of the Rococo. Sensitive and weakly, nervous and pampered, he represented the ideal of this over-refined age. Correggio born two centuries later is called Boucher.

His *Io* at Vienna signifies the acme of the age of the triumph of sensuality. Here at last the word is

THE SCHOOL OF CUPID
National Gallery, London

spoken which lay upon the lips of Leonardo, when he converted the chaste and pious womanly ideal of Savonarola into his own female type, glowing with life and vibrating with passion. Correggio offers gratification to the longing of the age. Along this path no further progress was possible, and the great reaction now began. All those masters whose art was a reaction upon that of the preceding epoch could not conceive of the nude without sensuality. By the following artists the nude was withdrawn from the sphere of the senses and raised to an artistic problem. The lines of Michelangelo,

> "Woe to the man whose blind and reckless hand
> Drags beauty down to where the senses stand,"

were intended not indeed for Correggio, of whom the Roman Titan knew nothing, but for his spiritual ancestor, Michelangelo's great rival, Leonardo. But they apply to the art which ruled in Italy from Leonardo to Correggio. The epoch of eroticism and of sensuality was followed by one of unapproachable majesty.

Chapter V

The Majestic and the Titanic

1. The Conception of Beauty in the Cinquecento

THE change experienced by Italian painting after the disappearance of the influence of Leonardo can only be understood by reference to the general change in taste since the beginning of the *cinquecento*. For all great epochs are pervaded by one artistic tendency, which permeates uniformly all expressions of life. As the men build, move about, and clothe themselves, so also do they paint. From this point of view it is easy to understand why the painting of the later sixteenth century considered as beautiful exactly the opposite of what the waning *quattrocento* had honoured.

Il Cortegiano, the manual of the perfect cavalier, published by Count Castiglione in 1516, is an account of what was at that time considered gentlemanly in society. It is improper, said Castiglione, to make violent or awkward gestures, to take part in rapid dances. The antique *gravitas*—a grave and sustained dignity—is mentioned as the essence of good tone.

In accordance with this sentiment a style of costume

came into fashion which in its majestic fulness would permit none but serious, sustained gestures. The fifteenth century had loved an angular, coy slenderness in costume; somewhat stiff and pedantic for women, tight-fitting for men. Fashion delighted in the gay, lively colours, embroidered borders, glittering chains, golden caps, and gleaming pearl necklaces to be seen in Jan van Eyck's paintings, and in ruffles, creases, and angular folds. In the sixteenth century this was all eliminated in favour of a great sweep of line. The form of garments is of grandiose simplicity, not overloaded as formerly with dainty details. While formerly the suppleness and slimness of the body had been emphasised by short sleeves and tight-fitting hose, the costume is now treated with breadth and dignity. Women are clad in heavy rustling brocades, the puffed sleeves of which make the body appear broad and majestic. The skirt, formerly short, now received a mighty train, only permitting a sustained walk, an *andante mæstoso*. A black cap and wide mantle, rich in folds, give the men a conscious, serious, and imposing expression, their movements, formerly so dainty, are full and round.

The portraits of the *cinquecento* differ in yet another respect from those of the preceding epoch. It is not unimportant for the psychology of the age that bust portraits, formerly the exclusive fashion, now developed into half and three-quarter lengths. While for such a soulful time as the *quattrocento* the head alone

was of importance, the man of the *cinquecento*, for whom dignity of movement had become so important, preferred, if possible, to be portrayed in full figure. Whereas formerly only slenderness was popular, to emphasise which the arms were pressed firmly against the body, now a pose is sought which will admit of the greatest possible breadth of movement. In consequence of the majestic impression which artists sought to make, the accessories are also changed. Even with Memling, the men still held a rosary, the women a prayer-book; and Perugino added to his portrait of Francesco dell' Opere the inscription, *Timete Deum.* Now the ladies hold a fan and the hands of the men rest upon a sword. The conception of majesty would no longer permit of an humble attitude towards the other world. Even the age of the men portrayed is changed. At the beginning of the *quattrocento*, when it was the custom to observe everything microscopically, portrait-painters preferred the heads richest in detail—in wrinkles and folds—and consequently matrons and old men. Later, when the tendency towards daintiness prevailed, girls and youthful pages were the favourite subjects; and even when men were represented, they retained something youthful in their tight-fitting costume, curled hair, and smooth-shaven faces. The *cinquecento* has nothing to compare with the graceful, girlish busts depicted at the close of the fifteenth century. Whether one thinks of *Lavinia*, *Dorothea*, or the *Donna Velata*, the

galleries of beauty of the sixteenth century consist only of ripe, well-developed womanhood. In like manner the portraits of youths are rare. The subjects are almost exclusively men, no longer shaved but with countenances framed by a serious beard; at that age which most gives the impression of *gravità riposata*—of dignity and power.

Just as men appear serious and powerful in their portraits, so the apartments in which they move are great and spacious. During the Early Renaissance the chief aim of architects was to attain fresh grace and slender elegance in their buildings. The slender columns of the palaces resemble the people in their tight-fitting clothes; and the walls of the buildings were as richly and daintily decorated as the costumes. In the sixteenth century, in harmony with the changes in costume and movement, there appears also in architecture impressive power and simple grandeur. All trifling ornament is avoided; the forms are heavy and massive, the apartments high and broad, in order that the majestic bearing may not be restricted.

As the paintings must correspond with these men and this architecture, a new ideal of beauty finds its introduction into art. It is sufficient to compare the Madonnas of the *cinquecento* with those of the previous epoch. In the *quattrocento* the forms were slender and delicate, austere and budlike; in Leonardo's day the closed bud began to open; and now it beams

in mature, summer-like splendour. Another language of gesture is developed. Whereas in the paintings of Filippino and Pollajuolo the figures had walked in a dainty measure, they now stand firmly upon the ground. Then they had stretched the little finger and held their garments with affected elegance; now they affect neither the graceful gestures of the *quattrocento* nor the soft, subtle ones of Leonardo's day, but broad and princely movements.

The psychological change is no less radical. People who preferred the sword and fan to prayer-book and rosary in their portraits could have no more use for humble saints, nor conceive of the divine in servile form. In place, therefore, of the *umiltà*, which had been the ideal of the age of Savonarola, *maestà* now appears. If formerly Mary's hair was covered by a gloomy matron's veil, she is now clad in princely garments. If she had formerly been the devoted handmaiden of the Lord, and later in the works of Correggio a woman of the world, she has now become the queen of heaven. Neither melancholy nor tenderness beams from her eye; but proud and distinguished, lofty and unapproachable, she glances down from above. An *odor di regina* pervades her being. The complete absence of the motive of the nursing Madonna, to which the age of Leonardo had imparted a slight tendency towards the sensual, must likewise be attributed to these conceptions of dignity and princely majesty.

The form and the composition of the paintings also became different. The small and detailed panels which the former age had loved now appeared trivial; for the impression of the sublime could only be obtained in life-sized or more than life-sized figures. The miniature painting of the former epoch therefore finds no continuation. As regards composition Leonardo had indeed taken a decisive step. Improving upon the mere juxtaposition of detail of the *quattrocento*, he had attained the principle of compressing within a small space the greatest possible action. This tendency to develop the scene briefly and without accessories by means of a few figures remained in the fifteenth century the prevailing one. But Leonardo's sense of space, his concentration of action within narrow limits, no longer suited a time used to such spacious apartments. As the high bearing of the *cinquecento* could not thus be limited, artists confined themselves more and more to a few large figures, moving freely and easily in the midst of a spacious architecture. It is a characteristic circumstance that, whereas during the *quattrocento* painters were often at the same time goldsmiths, they are now at the same time architects. Then they affected microscopic vision and joy in decoration, now a broad view and impressive sense of roominess. The triangular composition which Leonardo preferred now seemed too angular. As in costume they no longer preferred bell-shaped dresses and small shoulders for women, but full hips and puffy sleeves,

they also arranged the composition of the picture in soft, flowing lines. The circle, bow, curve, and a wavy line are their prevailing schemes of composition.

Even the ideal of landscape followed this new taste. The fifteenth century, with its taste for sharp, angular lines, loved also in landscape jagged, harsh outlines, and depicted it in the angular bareness of its forms. The sixteenth, which affected softness of line, prefers also in nature curved and wavy forms, as is shown by the use of vegetable forms to soften the hard outlines. The earlier artists, who loved rugged, muscular men, exhibited the skeleton of the landscape, to which those of the *cinquecento*, who preferred full and imposing bodies, added flesh. The fifteenth century, which painted slender people in hose, preferred cypress, pine, and fir trees with slender and ascending, tapering and pointed forms. The painters of the *cinquecento*, on the other hand, avoided these trees because only the full, well-rounded form of trees rich in foliage corresponded to the majestic beings with broad gestures which appear in their paintings. The parallel even applies to the flowers. As the fifteenth century, which had created the graceful portraits of maidens, saw in landscape principally the charm of the springtime, the sixteenth, whose ideal was the well-developed woman, saw nature only in the glowing splendour of summer.

The artists themselves are as majestic as the pictures which they painted. In Castagno's day, they were

wild comrades, uncouth and defiant as the unhewn walls of Palazzo Pitti; in the days of the Magnifico they became æsthetes. Savonarola made friars of them, and afterwards they plunged with avidity into the whirlpool of life. Now they are settled men of the gravity which Castiglione describes as characteristic of the perfect cavalier; radiant in majestic distinction, and associating as equals with the great men of the world.

III. Titian

Titian, the mighty king of the Venetian *cinquecento*, has the same relation to Giorgione as clarified, quiet manhood to the passion and ecstasy of youth. With Giorgione, one thinks of the verses which Mogens wrote of himself:

> "In Sehnen leb' ich
> In Sehnen";

and with Titian of the words of Faust:

> "Entschlafen sind nun wilde Triebe
> Mit jedem ungestümen Thun."

Not in Venice itself, not even in the neighbouring plain, but in the distant Alps, he first saw the light of day; and his early years were spent in the midst of solemn pine woods and mighty mountain walls. This alone gave to his personality a different character. When he—a Hercules in growth, deep chested (for he had breathed only the keen mountain air), his

features sun-browned as if cast in bronze, his eye strong and clear, and with that keen, eagle glance which one ascribes to the world's conquerors—came from his rude mountains into the shimmering wonder-city, into the sultry atmosphere of Venice, he stood before the easel with a consciousness that he would achieve greatness and become the prince of Venetian painters, simply because he willed it. This force of will, this σωφροσύνη, the serious direction of life, never deserted him.

As in the case of almost every other artist, there was a period in Titian's life when he was not himself. When he painted the *Gypsy Madonna* at Vienna he wandered in Bellini's path, and in the *Tribute-Money* he followed Leonardo. So there are also paintings by him which seem the product of Giorgione's art: like the *Three Ages of Man* and *Heavenly and Earthly Love*. But just these paintings show that Titian never painted real *Stimmungsbilder*. Under his firm hands the soft fabric of Venice received the quality of granite. Even works like the *Heavenly and Earthly Love*, notwithstanding their ravishing beauty, are hardly dreamy and melting. Titian is no dreamer; he does not possess the tear-shimmering elegiac and bucolic qualities of Giorgione. When he is genuine, the real Titian is lofty and powerful, stony and firm as the mountains of his home. The light that flows about his figures is not sultry and sensual, but cold and clear. Terms like lovely, charming, or dreamy can as little be

FLORA

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

applied to his works as to his home, the awe-inspiring hills of Cadore; but they may properly be termed powerful and majestic. The sublime element, corresponding to the nature upon which the first astonished glance of the lad fell, and also the primeval power of the mountaineer replaces with him the dreamy softness of Giorgione, the son of the plain. He has something of the primeval trees of his home, which, growing in a stony, precipitous soil, were early strengthened to defy all elements, because their roots were so tough and their branches so firm. He even has much of the cruel egotism of such giant trees. As they robbed all the lesser shrubbery about them of sunlight, in order that their own foliage might be developed on all sides, so Titian, in accordance with the right of the stronger, pushed aside with his powerful elbows all those who would have lived and created beside him.

Yet another phase of Titian's art may be explained from his mountain origin. The house in which he was born lies at the uttermost end of the village, where the hill begins and the Pieve roars down from storm-capped heights. He heard the wind sweep through the mighty tree-tops and rattle the joints of the houses; he saw uprooted stones crush against the shore, and the rain pour down from black storm-clouds. So he was the first to associate with the quiet repose and the tender lyricism of Venetian painting a dramatic and impassioned element.

The two principal works which belong in this class, the *Battle of Cadore* and *Peter Martyr*, were destroyed by fire—as if the elements wished to revenge themselves for his wild portrayal of their destructive power. But ancient prints have handed down their content. In a narrow ravine from which no escape is possible, men and horses struggle; the smoke of burning villages arises; rain and lightning stream and strike from the gloomy cloud. A wild and stormy note sounds through his *Peter Martyr*. The figure of the saint is athletic and powerful; that of the murderer bending over him is wild and gigantic; their garments rustle and the tree-tops bend in the wind.

If his *Assumption* upon its appearance only created cool astonishment, the reason was that in a conservative city like Venice and in the midst of a quiet, priestly, solemn art, the picture was felt to be unsuitable. As if drawn by a celestial magnet Mary, her mighty arms out-stretched, ascends towards heaven. Her dark hair flutters in the wind, the folds of her garments swell grandiosely, and a roar like the moving wings of the archangels sounds through the air; astonished, the apostles stretch their arms upward. In the church of the Frari, before the *Pesaro Madonna* one first recognises the dramatic action which Titian brought into Venetian art. At the base of a mighty column, powerful as those which were in future to support St. Peter's, Mary sits; not in the centre of the painting, nor even in full face, as Byzantine tradition

demanded. For the column is erected on the side of the painting, and is balanced only by a fluttering banner which one of the praying figures unfolds. With this the principles of composition of the past are deserted; the lines are not arranged in regular architectonic order; a composition which reckons only with coloured masses takes the place of regular linear arrangements.

True, this one characteristic is not the determinative for Titian's art. Although his mountain origin explains a great deal in which he differs from the more naturalised Venetians, he nevertheless came as a young man to Venice. For this reason his art does not always remind of the summits of the dolomite Alps, but more often of the quiet mirror of the lagoons.

That Titian did not become a stormy dramatist is, aside from the conditions of the time, the result of the course of his life. Never had an artist a more even career; never did one understand better how to shape life into a work of art. His whole existence was a single great harmony, without want or mighty struggles, without convulsions. As early as 1516, Titian, receiving the legacy of his master Bellini, was appointed the official painter of Venice, and his course of fortune, a lifelong triumphal procession, began. In 1520 he appeared at the zenith of his fame; no meteor, but a quiet gleaming star, which, gradually but constantly ascending and in a slow course without diminution of power, brightens the firmament. The

mightiest princes of Europe loaded him with commissions and honours: Charles V., who summoned him to his court at Bologna and Augsburg, Pope Paul III., and Francis I. of France, who, in flattering letters, sued for his favour. Two sons and a daughter of radiant beauty filled his house with joy—that patrician home which he erected far from the turmoil of the market-place, and where he lived independently, devoted to art and to his friends. Here he received Henry III. with princely splendour; here was the scene of those social gatherings which remind one of Feuerbach's *Dante in Ravenna*. Proud senators and noble ladies wandered through the shady arbours of his gardens, and when the sun had sunk, and the distant islands gleamed in evening twilight, the laughter of the gondoliers, song, and the music of lutes sounded over the lagoon. "All princes, learned men, and distinguished persons who came to Venice visited Titian," relates Vasari; for "not only in his art was he great, but he was a nobleman in person."

This distinction has also left its mark upon his art. What we call the idealism of Titian is not the result of æsthetic reflection, but the natural point of view of a man who wandered upon the heights of life, never knew trivial care, nor even experienced sickness; and therefore saw the world healthy and beautiful, in gleaming and majestic splendour. Artlessly he approaches things which an idealist would have avoided, as when in his *Danae* he contrasts the royal in the person

of his heroine with the plebeian in the ugly old woman; or when he depicts the *Presentation of Mary in the Temple* as a great public gathering in the sense of Gentile Bellini, in which senators and bedecked patrician women, market-women and beggar boys are presented. But even the most ordinary he ennobles; the peasant riding upon his ass to market has the great style of the metopes of the Parthenon; and all his works are pervaded by a great repose, the royal tranquillity of his own being.

In his portraits this style is especially conspicuous. He never attempts to beautify or flatter in a servile way. With awful realism he portrayed the old and wasted body of Paul III. with the trembling spider fingers, the thin half-decayed lips, the bleary eyes whose crafty, fox-like glitter is all that is still alive in this mummy. In like manner Charles V. was well advised when he named Titian his Apelles. While other painters had painted only his pale, scrofulous, icy mask, Titian ennobled it with something of his own majesty. That black knight in steel armour in the Madrid picture, riding with tilted lance over the battle-field at daybreak, is not the loiterer with whom the electors of Germany trifled, the confused, hesitating mind which received its political instruction from Granvella the chancellor; but the personification of the coldness of a great general in battle, and of destiny itself approaching, silent and unavoidable. And the emaciated reticent man, who in the Munich portrait

sits shivering upon the veranda of his palace, enveloped in spite of blooming summer in thick fur, is not the melancholy grey-beard, broken in body and will, who, disgusted with the world and with himself, a year later retired as a hermit to the monastery of San Yuste, and there, surrounded by ticking clocks and black coffins, constantly celebrated his own funeral. Titian had given him that of which Charles in his best years boasted —the penetrating intelligence of the greatest statesman of his day and the Olympian indifference of the ruler of two worlds.

Although Titian is celebrated in text-books as the painter of kings because the kings of the sixteenth century sat to him for their portraits, the title is more justified in a reverse sense. The man who was himself a prince among his associates ennobled, like a king by the grace of God, every one who applied to him for his patent of nobility. The artist who, when the plague snatched him away, was buried not like Perugino and Ghirlandajo in the potter's field, but like a king in the church of the Frari, made princes of all men. Aretino, the choleric man of letters, looks like Jupiter whose darkening brow makes the great of the earth tremble. The little Strozzi maiden seems a king's child; and his daughter Lavinia is transformed into a Greek goddess, who has enveloped her mighty limbs in the splendid garb of the Renaissance in order to linger for an hour among mortals.

His landscapes are the result of the same feeling for

THE MAN WITH THE GLOVE
Louvre

style. He has painted nature in all her moods, but convincing truth is never lacking. Every detail shows an artist who has grown great in nature, with whom he never lost touch. Yet his biographers have endeavoured in vain to identify the localities; for Titian's landscapes, true in detail and inspired by the scenery of his home, are never exact copies of reality. The azure tone of the distance is deeper, the brown of the leaves warmer, and the light of the sun more gleaming. He has created a sublime world, superior to the earthly world in nobility, because as a landscape painter he depicted not nature but himself. By reason of this exalted style he has become the painter of the heroic landscape, the forerunner of Poussin and Claude. His reputation was so firmly founded that the age of classicism, the epoch of Winckelmann, still called him the Homer of landscape.

This epithet leads us to another characteristic—the feeling for the primeval and the patriarchal generally associated with the name of Titian. One can only conceive him as he stands in the portrait of the Berlin Gallery, mighty as a patriarch of the first age of the world. Eighty years have passed over him, but an indestructible power lies in that head, with its fiery, gleaming eye and the high and mighty forehead. A heavy fur cloak envelops his body and the chain of the Golden Fleece adorns his breast—not conspicuously but naturally. In this picture all conceptions of Titian are united: the distinguished gentleman,

the son of the Alps, but above all the Homeric patriarch. Although there are numerous other portraits of him, not one shows him as a decayed old man, or as a youth. He seems always the aged man, with whom the conception of youth is as difficult to unite as with Jehovah, "the ancient of days." To this mature old age, long after Giorgione rested under the sod, his most important works belong. They are the youthful works of an old man, the full, ripe creations of a patriarch who remained ever young. This is not unimportant for their artistic comprehension.

For Titian never painted the springtime nor winter, when the rigidity of death covers the earth. The beautiful sunny October days, when thick blue grapes gleam from the dark foliage; when the leaves shimmer in warm, brown tones, and succulent fruit loads the trees—such is Titian's season. It is no accident that he is so fond of placing a basket of ripe apples in his pictures of the Madonna, or of giving his daughter a bowl of fruit. These peaches, grapes, melons, and oranges in their gleaming, golden splendour meant for Titian what the lily did for Botticelli, the master of the springtime. Even when flowers appear, they are never spring blossoms—snowballs, crocus, anemones or gentian—but the well-developed flowers of the autumn, and perhaps also pansies or violets, because they are more sonorous and less youthful in colour. As the autumn of the year so also he preferred the autumn of the day—the evening hour, when a deep

harmony of colour suffuses all things; even after a long, beautiful day the earth lies in repose before the veil of night sinks over it.

Corresponding to this also is his ideal of woman, with this difference, that she is usually portrayed ten years younger than man. For they are not exactly autumnal, these mighty women who seem never to wither, but to beam in an eternal, powerful beauty. If it is not autumn, neither is it springtime; but the high summer in its rich, mature splendour. Neglecting youth in its dewy freshness and its coy grace, he painted only the proud majesty of the mature woman.

He paints her with a serious, quiet feeling of a settled manhood, which no longer knows dreaming or longing. The star which illumines his work is not Venus, but the evening star. The circumstance that no traditions survive about the models of Titian points to his difference from Giorgione. It is indeed related that his *Venus* in the Uffizi represents Eleonora, the Duchess of Urbino, and for the others fair-haired Lombard women may have been his models, or German maidens from the distant Alps. For the proud and mighty female type of his paintings has nothing in common with the small, brown, black-eyed Venetians, who in their little wooden slippers glide over the Piazza di San Marco, as nimble as lizards. The Venetians of the *cinquecento* probably regarded Titian's women with similar eyes to those with which the Romans gazed

upon the German queen Thusnelda, marching royal and proud in the triumphal procession of Germanicus.

The principal thing remains that Titian, according to Vasari's account, painted mostly from his own imagination, and only used the female model in case of necessity. Unlike Giorgione, the first to make a pilgrimage to the isle of Cythera, Titian knew neither passion nor desire. A female body did not signify a woman for him, but a harmony of form, line, and colour. Like his picture of Alfonso d' Este placing his mailed fist upon the bosom of his beloved is Titian's feeling for women.

In this Olympian repose, this lofty patriarchal tranquillity, he is the most Hellenic of all Christian painters. Even Correggio was not capable of conceiving the nude from the purely artistic standpoint, but inserted the most un-Grecian element imaginable, that of desire, into the Hellenic worship of beauty. Titian's figures have nothing languishing or tempting, and no sensual smile plays about their features. Even when Jupiter disguised as a satyr surprises the nymph Antiope, or Danae receives the golden rain, his works are pervaded by the candour of antique sculpture, a majestic sublimity which makes them almost sacred pictures. Calmly, without desire, the great black eyes of these women shine, and because they are so unapproachable and so free from all earthly longing, they are free also from prudishness and everything trivial. Their nudity is as

awe-inspiring as the exalted repose of Aphrodite of Melos.

This Hellenic spirit is also expressed in his religious paintings. "Hellenism, what was it? Measure, distinction, clearness." Schiller's definition applies to no Christian master as it does to Titian. True, Christian notes are occasionally sounded in his works. When he depicts martyrdoms like that of St. Laurence, or the *Magdalen* as a crushed penitent, the Bible and skull at her side, painted for Philip I.—these are the heralds of that convulsed and ecstatic spirit which dominated the close of the sixteenth century. But even in such works he remains solemn and measured. In his Madonnas a festal Hellenic conception and classic purity have displaced the Christian spiritualism. The fall of the drapery is broad and majestic, the movement full and graceful. Not only Mary but all his saints have attained Hellenic distinction. They are animated by a feeling of princely power, not of vassal humility, by strength and not by weakness. Their bodies are powerful and their features bespeak a commanding majestic spirit. As Titian himself associated as an equal with the kings of Europe, so these saints associate in proud independence with their God. In all respects he seems the son of the great age when Pericles and Phidias lived. One does not think of clouds of incense in the twilight of Christian cathedrals, but of the murmur of the sea waves and of the solemn grandeur of the temples of Pæstum.

III. The Contemporaries of Titian

Although Titian was the centre of Venetian art as Leonardo of Milanese and Dürer of German, the following are independent masters, each one of whom has added a new province to the realm of beauty. None of them, however, equals the giant of Pieve in his all-embracing power.

In the works of Palma Vecchio the soft repose of Venetian art almost degenerates into *ennui* without temperament. He painted much the same subjects as Titian: especially broad pictures in which the Madonna surrounded by saints is seated in evening landscape. As his activity began at a very early period, he seems even to have introduced a stylistic innovation in that he was the first to substitute full-length for the half-length figures popular in Cima's day. His landscapes also are very beautiful, and hardly to be distinguished externally from Titian's. The joyful peace and charm of his native town of Serinalta suffuses them. The eye is delighted with luxuriant fruitful valleys, brown slopes, blue distances, and the sun spreading a glowing red over dark ranges of mountains. In many of his pictures (as in *Ruth and Boaz* at Dresden) there is something cosily countrified, such as Titian has attained only in some of his wood-cuts. But he seldom passes beyond this pleasant thoughtfulness and a certain mediocrity. As Serinalta, Palma's birthplace, is neither a sultry plain like Giorgione's home, nor an

Alpine region like Titian's, so his art is neither sensual and dreamy nor powerful and sublime. It is indeed attractive, but smooth and superficial; sympathetic in colour, but without fire; and nowhere is temperament or spontaneous sentiment revealed. No matter how many pictures he painted, it is always the same painting. Whether Mary, Barbara, Ottilia, or Theresa is represented is of as little significance as if in our own day Vinea labels his heads Ninetta, Lisa, or Giulietta. The same head and empty forms always recur; and if the lady, by way of a change, appears not clothed but nude, it makes no difference. Standing, she is called Eve; reclining, Venus. One of these pictures of Venus hangs in Dresden near the wonderful work of Giorgione; but a world-wide chasm separates them. What with Giorgione had been a transport of love, an ecstatic song of embraces, is with Palma the idealised portrait of a tiresome beauty lying upon a bed in order to display the full linear rhythm of her figure.

Even his portraits, which made him the most popular fashionable painter of Venice, suffer from idealistic retouches. True, these women are majestic enough; they are even imposing in the fulness of their wavy, luxuriant hair fastened with a pearl chaplet, in their voluptuous outlines and puffed silk sleeves, as rigid and festal as if a wire frame were fastened beneath. Sometimes they raise with ample gesture their heads of golden hair; sometimes they are on the

point of powdering themselves; or else they do nothing at all but lay their hand to their head and gaze with a glance which might be seductive if it were not so stupid. It is a question whether this unintelligent expression is to be ascribed to Palma or to the fair Venetians themselves. Women of intellectual ability, like Cassandra Fedeli and Caterina Cornaro, were certainly rare in Venice, and there were perhaps few whose natural horizon extended beyond the powder-box. But even the toilette has its poetry, as has been shown by the Rococo painters and by Rossetti. In Palma's hands, grace and delicacy, fire and gentleness of the eye, tenderness and mocking laughter are all lost in the same tiresome majesty. All the delicate dishes of the earth are changed into cold roast veal.

After Palma's death his heritage passed to Paris Bordone. Like Palma he also painted the most varied themes. Most of his pictures belong to that genre-class introduced by Gentile Bellini: scenes from Venetian history played amidst a rich architectural setting. The only difference, corresponding to the difference in time, is that the architecture now bears the style of the High Renaissance and the people no longer move about stiffly but with ample dignity. But, like Palma, he is principally known as a painter of Venetian women. Almost every gallery possesses a portrait of his red-haired beauties, in gleaming peach-coloured costume, and Bordone has a more distinguished effect than Palma. He not only knows

how to cause velvet and silk to shimmer as brilliantly as did his predecessor and renders the delicate shades of red hair and the soft gleam of powdered skin with equal appreciation, but also endows his women with such a commanding majesty, such a nobility of pose, and such queenly movements, that Palma's entire art seems trivial in comparison. For between him and Palma stands the giant figure of Titian, to whom Bordone owes his great style.

The Bonifazii and Bassani play an important rôle in the history of genre-painting. The former treated religious subjects as scenes from the patrician life of Venice, the latter as scenes from peasant life. It is vain to search for religious sentiment in the works of the Bonifazii. Worldly splendour and enjoyment is the prevailing sentiment of all their works. Festal buildings rise, and richly dressed people come and go; and the twilight, which they especially affect, brings unity of colour into this gay medley. It is difficult to say whether Bonifazio Veronese ever thought of the Bible when he painted his *Rich Man's Feast;* for the painting simply represents the private life of the Venetian nobility. After his dinner, the nobleman sits in his garden with his wife and daughters, one playing the lute, the other dreaming. There is nothing great about his art, which is only dainty and neat. But as the painters in the sixteenth century, in their endeavour to attain a monumental effect, usually avoided genre subjects, the pictures of the Bonifazii

are important as forerunners of the genre-painting of the following centuries.

The Bassani received their inspiration from the peasant idyls in some of Titian's wood-cuts. They went into the country, drew huts, oxen, and waggons, and transferred these studies to biblical and legendary subjects, which they decorated with rich landscape scenery. The household furniture and domestic animals of their paintings were of more importance to them than the biblical theme. Thus a certain rustic trend was introduced into Italian religious painting, and the animal-painting of the following century stands revealed in the background.

The development of painting in Brescia runs parallel with the Venetian. In his dramatic actions and technical *bravura* Romanino greatly resembles the Venetian Pordenone. Moretto, one of the noblest painters whom Italy produced, gave his altar-pieces a grandiose and solemn character. A cinquecentist in the powerful simplicity of his painting, he nevertheless preserved the solemn sincerity of the older time; and at the same time he strikes strangely modern accords of colour. In contrast to the Venetian's love of full and vibrating colour tones, Moretto attuned everything to a fine silver-grey. He felt himself most at home in painting the white cowls of his monks, which supply the leading note for the colour harmony of the whole. In nature also cool and grey-blue tones prevail; the water is white and the clouds gleam in

light grey. The evening red, with the Venetians a deep crimson, is with him a greyish or lemon colour. His chief altar-pieces, besides those at Brescia, are a fine panel at Berlin, *St. Justina* at Vienna, a Madonna at Frankfort and an *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Brera. Otherwise he is principally represented by portraits which are Venetian in their mighty outline, but almost northein in the intimate manner in which he depicts people in their accustomed surroundings.

In this domain he was followed by his pupil Morone, who, at a later period, laboured at Bergamo, and whose *Tailor* is one of the most extraordinary examples of the sixteenth century portraiture. Nothing is conspicuous or artificial in the pose; but a representative sublimity or monumental effect is to such an extent the prevailing note of the age, that a simple artisan is here transformed into a nobleman, and his portrait into a product of a mighty, historic style.

Savoldo is the most interesting artist of the group. As he, like Melzi and Boltraffio, was descended from a noble house and practised art as an amateur, he could, like them, follow his personal inclinations to a greater extent than his professional colleagues. His preference was for landscape, by means of which he changed the traditional religious representations into studies of light and shade and *Stimmungsbilder*. The great altar-piece painted by Titian in 1522 for Brescia, in which the *Resurrection of Christ* is represented as

taking place in the evening twilight, seems to have been the starting point of Savoldo's art, which prefers dreamy and mystic effects. In his picture of the *Transfiguration* a mystic light radiating from the Son of God fills the air; the *Bewailing of the Body of Christ* takes place in a melancholy evening light; and the *Adoration of the Shepherds* gives an opportunity to depict the charm of a moonlight night. Even in his portraits he introduces light effects, especially the soft shimmer of the evening glow streaming in through the window and flooding the room and its occupants. As they were the principal problems for him, he took the further steps of projecting light effects upon simple figures of every-day life. The mysterious picture of a girl in the Berlin Museum is especially celebrated. With a brown silk mantle drawn over her head, she glides past with rapid observing glance; the evening sinks, and only a belated sunbeam falls upon her pale, delicate face. In pictures of this sort Savolo anticipated by decades the development of professional art.

Sebastiano del Piombo, who was eight years younger than Titian, can only in his youthful works be considered a Venetian. His altar-piece of the church of San Giovanni Crisostomo belongs to the finest flowers of Venetian art. The figures of the women surrounding the throne of the saints are of a serious and solemn grandeur reminiscent of Feuerbach. He also had such a sense for deep glowing colours as had hardly

GIOVANNI BATTISTA MORONE

PORTRAIT OF A TAILOR
National Gallery, London

another in Venice. But after he had become a resident of Rome, in response to an invitation of Agostino Chigi, the Venetian painter became a Roman. Even his female portraits show the change: the mighty heroic woman of the Uffizi gallery with the broad Roman bust usually called *La Fornarina*, and *Dorotea* of the Berlin Museum, glancing at the beholder like a Venus Victrix, dignified and unapproachable. At a later period the son of Byzantine Venice was only revealed in the fact that he, even in heathen Rome, painted passion scenes, representations of the *Flagellation* or *Christ Bearing the Cross* and the *Entombment*, but the style of these works is Roman: instead of Venetian colour, a gloomy, leaden grey; instead of repose, a powerful dramatic action. This is especially shown in his picture of the Saviour summoning with mighty gestures the herculean Lazarus from the grave. Michelangelo, the Roman Titian, was the demigod before whom he admiringly bowed the knee.

IV. Michelangelo

Under Michelangelo's leadership the art of the *cinquecento* took its final step. Since the beginning of the century all detail had been increasingly eliminated in favour of the grand style. If formerly as much as possible of the beautiful world had been depicted in paintings, now the development of monumental figure-painting was accomplished. In this

respect Michelangelo spoke the decisive word. While in the pictures of the Venetians landscape played an important part as an aid to sentiment, Michelangelo proclaimed that there was no other beauty except that of the human form. Not a blade of grass occurs in his paintings, and when in the picture of the *Creation* in the Sistine Chapel it was necessary to indicate the origin of vegetable life, he made use of a sort of primeval fern. A piece of marble is the symbolic representation of a city, a tree of the garden of Paradise. Michelangelo's only problem is the nude human body, the representation of which for him was the equivalent of art.

For the comprehension of his paintings it is further necessary to remember that Michelangelo was really a sculptor. One loves to think of him sitting brooding before the marble quarry of Pietra Santa, reflecting upon all the beings concealed in the cliff. Although his occupation with painting goes back to his earliest youth, he was in his element only when he held hammer and chisel in his hands. Painting had for him an indirect value as the necessary surface representation of plastic thoughts which he was not privileged to carry out in marble. While he was not permitted to complete many works as a sculptor, painting afforded a means of conjuring up a whole world of beings in stone. The onesideness with which he followed these paths from the beginning was terribly impressive. He was never charmed by colour or by the psychic

content of a theme, but viewed the world as a sculptor alone, and is concerned only with the problem of form, even when it is not the expression of a given subject.

The *Holy Family* in the Tribune of the Uffizi is the first thundering revelation of his abrupt personality. Former artists had depicted love and tenderness, manhood and cheerfulness in such works and attempted to achieve the solution of a problem in composition. But Michelangelo was occupied with the problem only because Leonardo's cartoon of *St. Anne* had appeared. His chief interest was in those beings with gigantic limbs sprawling about the triangular composition. In the foreground sits a mighty woman, neither the humble Mary of a former day nor the queen of heaven of the *cinquecento*, but a heroine with brazen bones, and bare arms and feet. Stretching her knees to the right and her arms to the left she reaches over her shoulder to receive the Child from Joseph, a grey-bearded athlete, who is seated behind her. The Holy Family has become a brood of Titans, and the old theme of maternal joy a conglomeration of powerful dramatic action. The colour is of metallic hardness, the landscape only indicated in so far as it is necessary as the ground upon which they sit. Where other artists would have depicted trees, Michelangelo plants nude men with neither name nor purpose except that they are *there*.

The cartoon of the *Bathing Soldiers*, drawn in 1504, gave him for the first time an opportunity to make

the principal object what in the picture of the Uffizi had been relegated to the background—the nude. Instead of a battle-piece with arms and cannon, which the Signoria had desired as a pendant to Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari*, he represented the moment when an alarm summoned a crowd of bathing soldiers to battle. One attempts to climb the steep river bank, another bends over to help a comrade; a third, supported upon his hand, swings himself up to the shore; yet another lies negligently on the ground; and a fifth endeavours to draw his hose over his nude body, while his comrade runs about looking for his clothing.

A copious discourse might be delivered upon the content of the ceiling frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. After the Tuscan masters of the *quattrocento* had frescoed the walls with subjects of the Mosaic and Christian dispensation, contrasting the times *sub lege* and *sub gratia*, Michelangelo received the commission to recount upon the ceiling the period *ante legem*, from the story of the Creation to the Flood. To this he added the prophets, the sibyls, and furthermore the ancestors of Christ to prepare the way for His appearance. But such an account of the biblical content is quite inadequate. For Michelangelo there was nothing Christian or unchristian, neither sin nor forgiveness, neither guilt nor mercy; only human bodies and dramatic action.

In the three pictures from the life of Noah with which he began the work, the Florentine battle-piece is re-

echoed. He claimed from the beginning the right of treating the theme in the nude. The scene of the *Disgrace of Noah* he rendered senseless by representing not only the drunken patriarch but all the others nude. The *Thank-offering of Noah* he used as a pretext to assemble a group of nude men about an altar; and in the *Flood* the motive of the *Bathing Soldiers* is magnified into tremendous proportions. As there the enemy, here the water approaches. Men drag their wives away, and women gloomily brooding sit with their children upon the ground. One seeks to save his possessions, another to climb a tree, while a third, who endeavours to climb into a canoe, is pushed back by its inmates. Others are huddled together under a tented roof. Not a vestige of clothes or landscape appears.

With a better sense of perspective he confines himself in the following pictures to a few colossal figures. With hands raised and head thrown back, God the Father storms through space: "Let there be light!" He spreads his arms, the sun and moon arise; He stretches them downwards, and one feels that life is coming upon the earth, although Michelangelo only paints the force and not the effect. In the fresco of the *Creation* Adam lies like a colossus of clay; his body in full view, his hips turned, the knee drawn up. At God's touch an electric shock pulsates through the giant body. While in the older art the *Fall of Man* consisted of a landscape and two standing figures, Michelangelo

merely indicates paradise by a few leaves, and instead of reposeful figures presents contorted bodies. Eve, cowering, turns backward to receive the apple from the serpent, while the erect Adam reaches over his wife into the foliage of the tree. In colour also he becomes increasingly the sculptor. Although in the frescoes of Noah a few tints are still visible, in the later ones everything is softened to a dull grey.

Surrounding these middle pictures are twelve single statues, which, by way of ecclesiastical justification, Michelangelo labelled with the names ascribed by Christian mythology to the prophets and to the sibyls. But how indifferent it is whethe: one is called Joel, another Jeremiah, or a third Jonah! What cares he for the Delphic, the Libyan and the Cumæan sibyls! He is only concerned with the ecstatic convulsions of the gigantic bodies. Here one absorbed in deep thought supports his head on his hand; there a woman like a beautiful Medusa stares rigidly and wonderingly into the infinite; another prophet falls backward as if convulsed by a sudden revelation. And even if in this case the movement seems the expression of psychic action, purely physical motives actuate the other figures. A sibyl, wishing to procure a mighty book from a shelf, instead of rising reaches backward with both arms; another, in raising a giant folio, lying at her side upon her knee turns body and legs in opposite directions.

In the architectural framing he felt himself released

THE BIRTH OF ADAM

Fresco of the Sistine Chapel, Rome

from all biblical fetters. Instead of the decoration of the earlier masters he gives nude bodies. Children, painted the colour of bronze or of wood, writhe in the midst of triangular surfaces, and further on, youths conceived as caryatids support the pillars of the ceilings and the bronze tablets serving as labels for the prophets and sibyls. Finally, to crown the whole, the *Slaves*, high above the pillars, between the prophets and the sibyls, sit facing each other in pairs, winding the bronze medallions about with garlands and draperies. It is the old motive of the *putti* with the fruit garlands; only that Michelangelo has made giants of the children and changed the delighful sport into a neck-breaking performance of balancing. Ten times the same problem had to be solved, and always new motives of movement crowded upon him. Thirty years later he used the theme of the *Last Judgment* to hurl nude human bodies through the air in all conceivable movements, foreshortenings, and contortions.

This is, indeed, an external description of the pictures, but it does not correspond with the real content of Michelangelo's art. As his God was neither the terrible Jehovah of the Old Testament nor the loving Father of Christianity, but Fate passing indifferently over the earth, so, in describing his work, one can properly speak neither of man nor of the nude. For his creations are not men; they have nothing in common with the creatures living upon our earth. In depicting the nude, he indeed adopted the heritage of Pollajuolo

and Signorelli; but he is not tempted by the animal beauty of the body, nor is this exaggerated action the expression of a given theme. He only unburdens the nightmare of his own soul, and what he created relates only the tortures of a lonely, martyred spirit.

"'T was of my own sad soul a picture true,
And bore the stamp that marks my gloomy brow."

As Titian's life was a great harmony, Michelango's was a mighty dissonance. An event even before his birth is significant. When his mother had borne him seven months under her heart, and was accompanying her husband on horseback to his post in Chiusi, the animal stumbled; she fell and was dragged after it. This is a premonition that the life of this man would be a chain of catastrophes and mighty convulsions. Proud of the ancient blood of the counts of Canossa flowing, as he believed, in his veins, his father was not willing that his son should become an artist; and it was only by the son's immovable will that family resistance was conquered. Hardly was he apprenticed to Ghirlandajo when his relation to his teacher became one of enmity. Not long afterwards a further collision occurred. Torregiani, whom Michelangelo had irritated, broke his nose, a deformity which futher affected the formation of his character. He who should in appearance also have been a priest of the beautiful was a homely, deformed man; in striking contrast to Leonardo, who moved about like a young god or an enchanting magician.

Michelangelo, on the other hand, was small, his head almost abnormally formed, his brow mighty, and his eye without lustre; his flattened nose gave an expression of slavish, Malayan ugliness.

Thus in his youthful years he never learned what love meant. "If thou wishest to conquer me," in old age he addresses love, "give me back my features, from which nature has removed all beauty." Whenever in his sonnets he speaks of passion, it is always of pain and tears, of sadness and unrequited longing, never of the fulfilment of his wishes. But besides ugliness, quarrelsomeness of disposition was a gloomy present of nature to him. Sharp and ironical in his judgments, proud and irascible, he was not made to win friends. His judgment of Perugino was so severe that the latter accused him before a court; and in Bologna he quarrelled with good-souled Francia, to whose son he had observed that his father's living figures were better than those he painted. From their first meeting he was hostile to Leonardo, because even their external contrast aroused a feeling of bitterness within him. He was never present when Florentine artists assembled. Sensitive and suspicious, irritable and discontented, he always believed himself surrounded by intrigues. Even in his youth, at the time of his flight from Florence, that dependence upon gloomy forebodings appeared which in later life so often determined his actions. Only by labour could he assuage his melancholy and bitterness. He worked by fits and starts, lying for

a long time fallow and then tempestuously unburdening himself. It is related that he laboured so feverishly upon his *David* that he slept in his clothes just where he had fallen down in the evening, overcome by work.

When he came to Rome a new convulsion immediately followed, for here two worlds collided. Michelangelo himself was, in the highest sense, of a tyrannical nature; and upon the papal throne sat a similar spirit, the passionate *condottiere* Julius, of whom it was said that he was accustomed to beat his cardinals at table. Like two hostile powers the two stood opposite each other. Michelangelo spoke to the pope with head covered, and treated him, according to Soderini's words, "as the king of France would not have dared to." Yet the pope tamed him, and led him back, after his flight to Florence, "with a halter about his neck." But not only with Julius did he collide; nothing that he did took place without a battle. In Carrara he quarrelled with the labourers who hewed the blocks for the monument of Julius, and with the shipowners entrusted with their transport he was embroiled to such an extent that they finally besieged him in his house. He was compelled only by force to undertake the ceiling frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Bramante who had built the scaffolding, was accused of designs upon his life. The assistants, whom he had sent from Florence, he suddenly avoided; when they came to work they found the

chapel locked. Only because it was unbearable for him to be in company with others, he completed the giant work without assistance. "Overburdened with cares and bodily labour," thus he writes home, "I have not a friend in Rome, neither do I wish nor have use for any; I hardly find time to take nourishment. Not an ounce more can I bear than already rests upon my shoulders." When the work was completed he speaks in none of his letters of satisfaction, but only complains, praising Bugiardini because he was always satisfied with his own work, while he himself was not permitted to finish even one in accordance with his desire.

Nevertheless, at a later period, he looked back upon the years which he had spent under the reign of Julius II. as upon a golden age. When the wild choleric Julius was succeeded by the effeminate, sybaritic Leo X., the discord between Michelangelo and the world into which fate had thrown him grew continually greater. A joyful epicurean spirit prevailed at Rome. One reads of merry cardinals and beautiful women, of Chigi's villa and of the luxurious banquets at which golden plates that the pope had used were hurled into the Tiber. In the midst of this world of agreeable cavaliers, beside Raphael, who won all by his lovable character, stood the sarcastic, reticent Michelangelo, unbearable in demeanour, firm and immovable in his opinions; passing judgment even upon Raphael with unmerciful keenness. As the

pope observed to Sebastiano, Michelangelo was *terribile* and filled people with fear.

It thus came to pass that he was banished by a commission to build the façade of San Lorenzo at Florence, where he lived during the following years. Here he witnessed the destruction of Florentine freedom, and was in charge of the fortifications during the siege, only to flee at a decisive moment—another symptom of the conflict of will which drove his tormented spirit hither and thither. Of the works which he planned not one was executed; for his plans were too gigantic. Even in his youth he wished to transform a cliff near Carrara into a colossus, and he planned to make the tomb of Julius a forest of statues. As gigantic as were his plans, so small and poor did that which he was permitted to complete seem to him. There is always a dissonance between his mighty impulse to create and the impossibility of realising this impulse. The man who felt superhuman power in himself went through life with leaden weights upon his feet.

The return to Rome did not change his life. Raphael and Leonardo were dead, and a new diminutive race had grown up. Commissions which in his letters were the subject of grim persiflage were assigned him. He withdrew more and more from society, becoming an "impregnable fortress," as contemporaries called him. He associated not with the living but with the dead, especially with Dante, whom he honoured as a

mighty, misunderstood spirit. He suffered about him only people who did not become burdensome to his own thoughts; he had boors in his house and loved to speak with children. His repugnance to seeing others was so great that, when in his work upon the *Last Judgment* he had fallen from the scaffolding, the physician had to force his way through a window in order to attend him. Even his family was a burden to him. Without a home of his own, he had nevertheless to care for his father, brothers, and nephews—all of them genuine types of a degenerate nobility—who carried all their troubles to him. The manner in which he assisted them was likewise a curious mixture of touching love and indignant anger. The man who met the mighty of the world with such abrupt harshness, but watched through the whole night at the sick-bed of his servant, would rise in wrath over the demands of his relatives and yet lead the most penurious life in order to save for them.

A further anomaly should also be considered. However much writers have endeavoured to associate Michelangelo's sonnets with Platonism, the men to whom they were addressed, Tommaso Cavalieri, Luigi del Riccio, and Cecchino Bracci, were not Platonic ideals. When he wrote adoring poems to Cavalieri and drew the *Abduction of Ganymede* for him, he only revealed how a lonely man sought compensation for the love of women which was denied him. But even in this he did not get beyond torturing thoughts

and self-reproaches; for to his other burdens religious scruples were added. Memories of youth were awakened in him, of the days when he sat at the feet of Savonarola. As he had formerly stupefied his suffering by work, he now longed for peace of soul, for the heavenly love which, "stretched upon the Cross holds out a hand to us."

> "I should have plunged my spirit deep in God—
> But ah! through all the years I lent an ear
> To every fable that the world holds dear,
> And where sin led, unthinking took the road."

Angrily he realised at last the dissonance between the spirit within him and the bodily ills which tortured him. At the same time that he designed the cupola of St. Peter's, he also, in bitter mockery, made a drawing of himself as an old man moving about in one of the little frames used to teach children how to walk. He stands old and lonely "in a treacherous world of sorrows."

Only by his life can Michelangelo's art be explained. Because Titian was in harmony with himself and the world, the same inner happiness, the same mighty repose pours from his character into his works. Michelangelo is of the race of Tantalus. As in his life there was nothing lovable or joyful, so his art is neither joyful nor free, but fearful and oppressive. It was no accident that he gave to his statue of *Night* a mask with empty eyes and distorted features as a symbol of her dreams, that his first work was a drawing after

Schongauer's *St. Anthony Tortured by Demons*. In him also demons struggle, and his dreams were not beautiful but gloomy and terrible visions.

A single time, in his *Leda*, he painted the ecstasy of love; but precisely this work, which in content resembles the ideals of Leonardo, shows the difference between them. Leda does not tremble with joy as in Sodoma's picture, but is rather the goddess of misfortune whose brood of swans brought ruin upon Troy and Greece. As in his sonnets he calls the ecstasy of love a cry of pain, so in his picture an erotic scene is changed into a tragedy of fate. His women inspire one with fear rather than love; their arms are of steel, and their mighty legs are formed like marble columns. If the theme does not require it, he avoids the female body altogether. As in his life women played no rôle, so among the twenty *Slaves* of the Sistine Chapel there is not a single woman. He loved only the beauty of the male body, so much so "that it gave low-minded people cause for thinking evil of him." The "eternal feminine" which Titian and the followers of Leonardo celebrated is replaced in Michelangelo's art by the "eternal masculine."

But he did not represent the living man. For as the great recluse passed through the world in communication not with the living but with the geniuses of the past, so as an artist he seldom used living models; he preferred corpses, which powerlessly yielded to con-

tortion of the limbs which living bodies would resist. And as the man was the great scorner to whom the world could offer nothing, so the artist never represented natural mankind, but conceived a superhuman race of giants.

He often emphasises to the pope and his relations how he suffered in being torn from his world of ideas. So his creations are for the most part self-absorbed; they sleep or brood thoughtfully, and if anything disturbs their repose, they start as if absorbed in thought, fearfully turn their heads or raise their arms to ward off. Adam's gestures in the *Expulsion from Paradise* and the last line of the artist's sonnet to his reclining statue, the *Night*,

"Però non mi destar, deh! parla basso."

are characteristic of the frame of mind of this lonely man.

As he felt himself a giant in the midst of contemptible pigmies, so his creations are children of wrath, who would spring up and shatter a world. Moses, especially with his threatening, contracted brows and his untamed muscular power, is the incarnation of the mighty passions and glowing wrath struggling in Michelangelo's soul. But he is not only a titan; burning like Almighty God to create a world, he is a fettered giant; a Prometheus, whose hands and feet are bound by iron clasps. To what extent he realised this is shown

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

Fresco in the Sistine Chapel, Rome

by the *Slaves* of the Louvre. Indeed, he creates only bodies of titanic power and yet fettered, as if they were hindered in their movements by some superior power. His people never move freely and easily like Titian's; their surroundings always seem too narrow for the free action of their limbs. Here the framing is a triangle in which they can only cower but not stand; there a gable is placed above them, which, if they arose, they would shatter. Within this space which so heavily oppresses them, they struggle and stretch in mighty action, twist their limbs, contort and wind the different parts of their bodies hither and thither; with gigantic effort they seek to rise, and yet are unable to do so. In contrast with the full, joyful power in Titian, there is here something compressed, tortured; the unavailing struggles of Prometheus bound.

Even the conflict of the will so characteristic of Michelangelo's character recurs in the beings which he created. As he fortified Florence and yet fled at the critical moment; as in his poems be often uses the expression, "What shall I do? My will ever hesitates undecided"; so in his creations conflicting forces seem to contend, as if the different parts of the body were not directed by the same mind. While with other artists the movements unconsciously follow the will and the body is at unison with itself and the soul, with him the will does not seem to dominate the body. The separate limbs pursue different

paths. Here the muscles of the arm are strained for mighty action, but the body still reclines in deepest lethargy. There the neck is stretched and distended, but the limbs know not wherefore, being mechanically thrown in different directions. Or again, a sudden determination quivers through the body, but the limbs repose in dull apathy.

The *Last Judgment* of 1541 contains his legacy. Every element of wrath and bitterness that had collected in his proud soul is here poured forth. In older paintings the saints were silently and solemnly collected about the Saviour; wailing, but submissive, the damned yielded to their fate, and in solemn circles the elect soared to heaven. Michelangelo knows only wrath and revenge as the characteristic of the divinity. Naked, like a Roman *imperator*, Christ appears; the martyrs press forward, the angels sweep past, and a thunderbolt from His hand seems to shatter the universe. But it does not strike the damned. As Hutten said of Julius II. that he stormed the gates of heaven when Peter forbade him entrance, so Michelangelo cannot conceive of humility, slavish obedience and fear, or gentle suffering. Terrible as is his God with the mighty gesture, the athletes defy Him; they do not draw back, but press forward in ever thickening throngs. As they approach, their forms grow more powerful and their bodies are contorted into impossible muscular masses. These are no sinners receiving punishment for past actions, but rebellious giants storm-

ing heaven. The final judgment is transformed into a *Götterdämmerung.*

In the Pauline Chapel he spoke his last word. Harsh and shrill are the lines; here depicting a yawning void, there wild dramatic action. Peter, nailed head downwards upon the cross, seeks by a superhuman movement of the neck to turn round. It is Michelangelo, the fettered Prometheus, raising himself up for the last time.

For the Italian Renaissance he became the Fate which he himself had painted in the Sistine Chapel; for he deprived art of its joy in the simple and the ordinary, and of its pleasure in colour. After the artists had seen this world of dæmons, everything earthly appeared insignificant. They also wished to create giants in whom the powers of the universe struggled and contended. They attempted to make his language a universal one; but the greater the number of his followers, the more lonely the great master became.

V. The Triumph of the Formal

Of the two painters who at that time represented classic art in Florence, Andrea del Sarto is more nearly related to modern sentiment. Although noble composition meant everything to so true a son of the *cinquecento,* he nevertheless preserved, within this scheme of composition, complete freedom and a certain nervous mobility. The attitude of his figures is soft

and tired, their movements are of gentle indifference. In the softly bowed head of his angels the tender ecstasy which Leonardo gave such beings still survives; his female heads are also more nearly related to Leonardo's ideal of beauty than to the distinguished and majestic conception of the later *cinquecento*. Dark, passionate eyes, with blue rings bearing testimony to sleepless nights, look upon us with consuming glance. The cheeks are pale, and a loosened braid of dark hair, straying downward, increases the sleepy impression of his paintings. As if confirming Vasari's description of Lucrezia del Fede, the beautiful widow whom he married in 1517, as the model of his Madonnas and the evil genius of his life, a certain perverse piquancy is expressed in these heads. As a colourist also he entered upon the heritage of Leonardo by imparting a very individual shade to the tender *sfumato*, by substituting a subdued tone attuned to a cool grey or delicate silver key for the warm tones of Leonardo. In line as in colour he reveals the same soft, tired, aristocratic beauty; his favourite colours being black and white, yellow, red, and pearl grey, in which fine colour scheme he differs from all other painters of his day. With them one hears, in so far as colour is not sacrificed to plastic impression, the full flooding tones of the organ; with Andrea the soft, sharp notes of the violin. It is significant that he was fond of painting frescoes in grey monochrome, for this style corresponded best

with his refined, neurasthenic temperament. He is a painter for connoisseurs, and is most select in his taste; at one time morbidly interesting, at another attractive in his solemnity; and notwithstanding the majesty which the style of the *cinquecento* required, he was possessed of a worldly elegance belonging to the unique family of Filippino Lippi, Melzi and Boltraffio.

If we understand clearly what attracts us in Andrea del Sarto, we also know why Fra Bartolommeo makes such a strange impression. In the former's paintings we find men who are majestic and yet have souls; but in the latter's the difficulty of reconciling the apotheosis of the body, which was the real aim of the art the sixteenth century, with psychic refinement, too evidently appears. He has reached the stage in which feeling no longer animates the mighty forms, and where majesty is converted into hollowness. The body, in the *quattrocento* the fragile casement of the soul, has become an imposing vessel without content. What a mighty change to occur in the course of a decade! Like Botticelli and Perugino, Fra Bartolommeo belonged to those who gathered about Savonarola, and lived in the very convent where one painted and the other preached. He was at the head of the atelier connected with the convent of San Marco, and in conjunction with his friend Albertinelli provided many Tuscan churches with altar-pieces. But in these works the mysticism

of Fiesole as well as the tender soulfulness of Perugino is quite forgotten. For these older masters beauty of form was not an aim in itself, but only in so far as it was an expression of sentiment. Now, in the very cloisters of San Marco, the lay figure was invented by Bartolommeo. When his name is mentioned one thinks of apostles and prophets mighty in body but insignificant in soul, and recalls the words of Goethe: "By chilling idealisation and rigid dexterity these biblical subjects have been deprived of their simplicity and truth and torn away from the sympathetic heart. By majestically draped and trailing cloaks artists try to make us forget the empty nobility of the ecclesiastical personages."

Let us neverthelesss beware of regarding Fra Bartolommeo from a false point of view. If he does not paint like Perugino or Botticelli, the reason is only because his ideals are different; and the fifteenth century, in its psychic refinement, is more nearly related to the present day than the sixteenth. The *frate* nevertheless remains one of the representative men of that great age to which the cult of form, nobility of movement, and the majesty of the body meant everything. His first picture, the *Vision of St. Bernard* in the Florentine Academy, has nothing of the quiet soulfulness of Perugino; but in place of this it announces in the sweeping draperies that trend towards solemnity, in which the greatness of the master lay. To this everything that might destroy the general effect must

MADONNA DEL SACCO

Fresco in the Cloister of the Annunciata, Florence

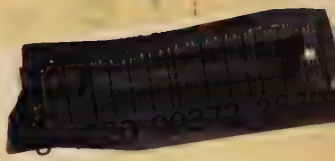
yield. No individual heads suit these draperies, for beauty must be of a "regular" type. No landscape can serve as a background for them; they can only stand in the midst of solemn, imposing architecture. This *ensemble* he creates with a firm hand. Mighty pilasters, roomy niches, form the frames of his scenes; amd he skilfully uses the steps of the throne to vary the composition. Sometimes he places the principal figure upon a pediment in order to attain rhythmic lines. A baldachin held by angels often forms the circular termination above. All his pictures sound in full rich tones like stanzas of Ariosto, and are of the same rhythmic flow as a well composed piece of architecture. After he had seen the prophets of Michelangelo at Rome, he himself with his *St. Mark* attempted the titanic. It was due to the religious movement which, as a reflex of the German Reformation, passed over Italy about 1520, that his last work, the *Entombment* of the Pitti Gallery, reveals psychic qualities which far transcend the level of the fifteenth century.

It was Fra Bartolommeo's unlucky fate that his works, just because the scientific rules predominated in them, became at a later period a welcome find for those who attempted to create classical art according to the formula of the classicists. His figures are distasteful to us, because they have become the conventional types of the "great historic style." His service nevertheless remains this, that he gave an

appropriate expression to the stately, pompous, and representative spirit of the *cinquecento*, and was the first to fix certain laws of composition, just as Uccello had a century earlier determined certain laws of perspective.

End of Volume I.

Muther



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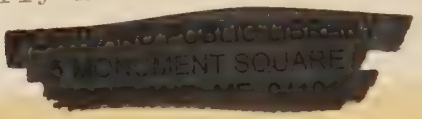

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